

PUBLIC HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PRACTICE EXAM (SAMPLE)

STUDY GUIDE



SAMPLE STUDY GUIDE WITH LIMITED QUESTIONS

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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. Exposure pathways are the routes by which a person comes into contact with a hazard. Which of the following are common exposure pathways?**
 - A. Ingestion
 - B. All of the above
 - C. Dermal contact
 - D. Inhalation
- 2. Which of the 10 essential public health services is responsible for enforcing laws?**
 - A. Enforce laws
 - B. Diagnose and investigate
 - C. Link to or provide care
 - D. Inform, educate, empower
- 3. Medicare is funded through which mechanism?**
 - A. Contributory program through FICA tax
 - B. General tax revenue only
 - C. Premiums from beneficiaries only
 - D. Donations from private funders
- 4. Which causation criterion requires that exposure precedes disease?**
 - A. Temporality
 - B. Dose-response
 - C. Strength
 - D. Consistency
- 5. Which statement correctly distinguishes waterborne and water-based disease transmission?**
 - A. Waterborne diseases are transmitted by ingestion of pathogens in water; water-based infections use water as habitat or intermediary
 - B. Waterborne diseases are transmitted through air droplets; water-based infections are by direct contact with water
 - C. Waterborne diseases are caused by chemical contaminants; water-based infections are caused by biological pathogens
 - D. Waterborne diseases occur only in rural areas; water-based occur only in urban settings

- 6. Who sets the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS)?**
- A. World Health Organization
 - B. State Health Departments
 - C. Environmental Protection Agency
 - D. Local Municipalities
- 7. Which item is a physical factor affecting health?**
- A. Geography
 - B. Education level
 - C. Income
 - D. Health policy
- 8. The Reform Phase (1900-1920) of the Health Resources Development Period is characterized by:**
- A. Social movements to improve health conditions in cities and workplaces
 - B. Growth of healthcare facilities and providers
 - C. New Deal programs and regulations
 - D. Hill-Burton Act requirements
- 9. Which rate is most useful in studying chronic diseases and includes both old and new cases in a given period?**
- A. Prevalence rate
 - B. Incidence rate
 - C. Mortality rate
 - D. Case-fatality rate
- 10. Which physical factor involves raw materials, by-products, waste discharge, and employee safety?**
- A. Industrial development
 - B. Geography
 - C. Climate
 - D. Built environment

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. Exposure pathways are the routes by which a person comes into contact with a hazard. Which of the following are common exposure pathways?

- A. Ingestion
- B. All of the above**
- C. Dermal contact
- D. Inhalation

Exposure pathways are the routes through which a hazard can enter the body. Ingestion occurs when contaminants are swallowed via food, drink, or hand-to-mouth transfer. Dermal contact happens when skin touches contaminated surfaces, water, soil, or chemicals, with some absorption through the skin possible. Inhalation is breathing in contaminated air, dust, vapors, or aerosols. Because all three routes are common ways hazards reach people, the option that includes all of them is the best choice. In practice, recognizing these pathways guides where to focus controls—handwashing and safe food/water practices to reduce ingestion, protective gloves and hygiene to limit dermal exposure, and ventilation or respiratory protection to curb inhalation exposure. Exposures can often involve more than one route at once, underscoring why multiple pathways are routinely considered in risk assessments.

2. Which of the 10 essential public health services is responsible for enforcing laws?

- A. Enforce laws**
- B. Diagnose and investigate
- C. Link to or provide care
- D. Inform, educate, empower

Enforcing laws is about turning public health rules into action to protect the community by making sure regulations are followed. This essential service involves regulatory oversight like inspections, monitoring compliance, investigating violations, and taking enforcement actions when needed. Through these steps, it creates accountability and deters unsafe practices, helping to prevent hazards such as unsafe food handling, polluted water, or dangerous work conditions. While other essential services focus on detecting health threats, informing the public, or linking people to care, enforcement specifically ensures that laws and regulations are actually implemented and complied with to keep people safe.

3. Medicare is funded through which mechanism?

- A. Contributory program through FICA tax**
- B. General tax revenue only
- C. Premiums from beneficiaries only
- D. Donations from private funders

Medicare is funded primarily through payroll taxes collected under FICA, paid by workers and their employers and deposited into the Hospital Insurance Trust Fund to cover Part A benefits. This makes it a contributory program, since current workers fund the benefits of current and future beneficiaries. While Parts B and D rely on beneficiary premiums and some general revenues, the essential funding mechanism described here is the FICA payroll tax. The other options aren't correct because general tax revenue isn't the sole source, premiums alone don't cover the entire program, and private donations do not fund Medicare.

4. Which causation criterion requires that exposure precedes disease?

- A. Temporality
- B. Dose-response
- C. Strength
- D. Consistency

Exposure must occur before the disease in time. This time-order sequence is essential for inferring causation because only if the exposure comes first can we argue it contributed to the development of the disease, not the other way around. If the disease occurs before or at the same time as the exposure, the exposure cannot be the cause. This requirement is what links an exposure to the subsequent disease. Dose-response looks at whether higher exposure leads to higher risk, strength describes the magnitude of the association, and consistency concerns replication across studies. These aspects are important for building causal confidence, but they don't establish that the exposure happened before the disease, which is the key element here.

5. Which statement correctly distinguishes waterborne and water-based disease transmission?

- A. Waterborne diseases are transmitted by ingestion of pathogens in water; water-based infections use water as habitat or intermediary
- B. Waterborne diseases are transmitted through air droplets; water-based infections are by direct contact with water
- C. Waterborne diseases are caused by chemical contaminants; water-based infections are caused by biological pathogens
- D. Waterborne diseases occur only in rural areas; water-based occur only in urban settings

Water transmission routes hinge on how water participates in getting pathogens to us. Waterborne means illness results from ingesting water that contains pathogens—drinking contaminated water leads to infection (think cholera, giardiasis). Water-based refers to situations where water serves as a habitat or intermediary in the pathogen's life cycle or in its transmission, so people become infected through contact with water or exposure to water-associated vectors or aerosols, not by swallowing contaminated water. Examples include infections tied to contact with contaminated freshwater or animals shedding into water, or pathogens that spread via water-related aerosols. The other option conflates waterborne with airborne spread or reduces transmission to direct water contact, which isn't the defining distinction here.

6. Who sets the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS)?

- A. World Health Organization
- B. State Health Departments
- C. Environmental Protection Agency
- D. Local Municipalities

The main concept: National Ambient Air Quality Standards are established by a federal agency, not by international bodies or local entities. The Environmental Protection Agency sets the NAAQS under the Clean Air Act, determining the national threshold levels for pollutants such as ozone, particulate matter, and other common air contaminants. These standards provide uniform health-based limits across the country, guiding states in designing their own air programs and control requirements. The World Health Organization offers international guidance, but it does not regulate or set U.S. ambient air standards. State health departments and local municipalities are responsible for implementing and enforcing the standards within their jurisdictions, often through state implementation plans and permits, but they do not set the national thresholds themselves.

7. Which item is a physical factor affecting health?

- A. Geography**
- B. Education level
- C. Income
- D. Health policy

The idea being tested is how the physical environment shapes health outcomes. Geography is a physical factor because it describes the location and natural environment where someone lives—the climate, terrain, water and air quality, and exposure to environmental hazards or resources. These physical aspects can directly influence health risks and access to services, such as heat exposure in hot regions, respiratory or water-borne concerns from environmental conditions, or how easily people can reach care and healthy foods based on where they live. In contrast, education level, income, and health policy are social or structural factors that influence health through resources, behaviors, and governance rather than through the physical environment itself.

8. The Reform Phase (1900-1920) of the Health Resources Development Period is characterized by:

- A. Social movements to improve health conditions in cities and workplaces**
- B. Growth of healthcare facilities and providers
- C. New Deal programs and regulations
- D. Hill-Burton Act requirements

During the Reform Phase, the emphasis is on social reform and policy changes aimed at preventing disease by improving living and working conditions in cities and workplaces. This era grappled with rapid urbanization and crowding, so reformers pushed for sanitation upgrades, clean water and sewer systems, better housing standards, safer workplaces, and regulations on foods and medicines. These public-health reforms reflect addressing social determinants of health rather than simply expanding hospitals or medical facilities. That's why this option—that social movements to improve health conditions in urban and workplace settings—best fits this period. The other options point to later developments: expanding healthcare facilities and providers describes the Growth Phase; New Deal programs and regulations and the Hill-Burton Act belong to much later decades focusing on broad national welfare and hospital construction.

9. Which rate is most useful in studying chronic diseases and includes both old and new cases in a given period?

- A. Prevalence rate**
- B. Incidence rate
- C. Mortality rate
- D. Case-fatality rate

When studying chronic diseases, you want a measure that reflects how many people are living with the condition at a given time, not just how many are newly diagnosed. Prevalence does exactly that: it tells you the number of existing cases in the population during a period (or at a point in time) divided by the population size. Because chronic diseases persist for long periods, many people accumulate as cases over time, so the prevalence captures both those who have had the disease for a while and those who were newly diagnosed. This makes it the best indicator for understanding overall disease burden, planning healthcare services, and allocating resources. Incidence, on the other hand, counts only new cases, which is useful for studying risk and the development of disease but doesn't convey how many people are currently living with the condition. Mortality rate measures deaths in the population, not how many people are living with the disease. Case-fatality rate looks at the proportion of diagnosed cases that result in death, which doesn't describe how widespread the disease is in the community.

10. Which physical factor involves raw materials, by-products, waste discharge, and employee safety?

A. Industrial development

B. Geography

C. Climate

D. Built environment

This item tests how a physical factor in environmental health is defined in terms of industry-related conditions. The aspect described—raw materials, by-products, waste discharge, and employee safety—captures the production cycle and the occupational environment created by industry. Industrial development encompasses not only the presence and growth of factories and processing plants but also how materials flow in (raw inputs), what materials come out (by-products and waste), how waste is discharged or managed, and how workers are protected and kept safe. This integrated view reflects how industrial activity shapes the physical environment and occupational health. Geography focuses on location and spatial relationships, climate on weather patterns, and built environment on the human-made surroundings like buildings and infrastructure. While these influence health in important ways, they don't specifically describe the full production and safety aspects tied to industry as a single factor.

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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.

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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