

Tennessee Private Investigator Licensing Practice Exam Sample Study Guide



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Featuring practice questions, answers, and explanations for each question.

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Questions

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- 1. Which of the following is NOT an occurrence that must be reported to the commission?**
 - A. Any change in personal income**
 - B. Criminal charges placed against the licensee**
 - C. A judgment for punitive damages against the licensee**
 - D. Material changes in information previously furnished**

- 2. Which of the following is NOT a typical online database for a private investigator?**
 - A. PACER**
 - B. FamilyTree Legends**
 - C. NCIC**
 - D. TLO**

- 3. Which of the following is NOT a requirement for PI applicants?**
 - A. Must be a US citizen or resident alien**
 - B. Must have no history of violent crime**
 - C. Must not have been declared incompetent by a court**
 - D. Must possess good moral character**

- 4. Which database system is known NOT to truncate Social Security Numbers?**
 - A. www.tracerinfo.com**
 - B. www.someotherwebsite.com**
 - C. www.exampledatabase.com**
 - D. www.anotherexample.com**

- 5. What must a licensee notify the commission about within 30 days?**
 - A. Any votes of disqualification**
 - B. Any change in the qualifying agent identified in their application**
 - C. Any audits or reviews performed on the company**
 - D. Any job offers received**

- 6. Which type of bankruptcy is designed for family farmers?**
- A. Chapter 7**
 - B. Chapter 11**
 - C. Chapter 12**
 - D. Chapter 13**
- 7. Which online database is used to check if a person is in jail or prison?**
- A. WWW.VINELink.com**
 - B. WWW.BOP.GOV**
 - C. PACER**
 - D. NCIC**
- 8. What does countersurveillance aim to establish?**
- A. Whether an individual is under investigation**
 - B. The effectiveness of private investigation methods**
 - C. If any electronic devices are compromised**
 - D. The legal requirements for surveillance**
- 9. What must be recorded at the beginning of an interview?**
- A. Witness's criminal history**
 - B. Date and location of the interview**
 - C. Evidence gathered previously**
 - D. List of questions to be asked**
- 10. When choosing a computer for private investigation work, which feature is considered the most essential?**
- A. The largest hard drive**
 - B. The fastest processor**
 - C. The most RAM**
 - D. The best graphic card**

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. Which of the following is NOT an occurrence that must be reported to the commission?

A. Any change in personal income

B. Criminal charges placed against the licensee

C. A judgment for punitive damages against the licensee

D. Material changes in information previously furnished

The correct choice highlights that personal income is considered private financial information and not directly relevant to the operational integrity or trustworthiness of a private investigator. The Tennessee Private Investigator Licensing Act emphasizes the need for the commission to be informed about changes that could affect a licensee's ability to perform their duties ethically and legally. Criminal charges, punitive judgments, and material changes in previously submitted information are critical to maintaining accountability and transparency in the profession. These occurrences can significantly impact a licensee's fitness for duty or professional conduct, raising the need for notification. On the other hand, changes in personal income do not typically pertain to the responsibilities and ethical standards expected of a private investigator, making them non-reportable to the commission.

2. Which of the following is NOT a typical online database for a private investigator?

A. PACER

B. FamilyTree Legends

C. NCIC

D. TLO

FamilyTree Legends is not a typical online database commonly utilized by private investigators. This database focuses primarily on genealogy and family history research, helping users to construct family trees and trace ancestry. While these aspects can be interesting and occasionally relevant in the context of personal investigations, they do not serve the core needs of private investigations, which often require information on criminal records, public records, and other pertinent details that can assist in a case. In contrast, the other options serve direct investigative purposes. PACER provides access to federal court records, which can be crucial for background checks and legal investigations. NCIC is a national database containing criminal information and is an essential tool for law enforcement and private investigators to check on criminal history and warrants. TLO is a comprehensive investigative database that offers various types of public records, including contact information, asset searches, and other vital data that private investigators frequently rely on during their work.

3. Which of the following is NOT a requirement for PI applicants?

- A. Must be a US citizen or resident alien**
- B. Must have no history of violent crime**
- C. Must not have been declared incompetent by a court**
- D. Must possess good moral character**

The requirement for private investigator applicants in Tennessee emphasizes maintaining public trust and safety, which includes ensuring that individuals permitted to work in this capacity possess good moral character, have not been declared incompetent by a court, and are either U.S. citizens or resident aliens. However, while a history of violent crime can certainly reflect on a candidate's character, the specific statutorily defined requirements do not explicitly include a prohibition based solely on past violent criminal history. This highlights that, while those with violent crime histories may be seen as less suited for the role, not having a history of violent crime is not a formalized requirement in the same manner as the other criteria listed. It's important to note that applicants still undergo background checks where such information could influence the approval process. Thus, this makes the option referring to the history of violent crime the correct choice for something that is not a formal requirement for obtaining a private investigator license in Tennessee.

4. Which database system is known NOT to truncate Social Security Numbers?

- A. www.tracerinfo.com**
- B. www.someotherwebsite.com**
- C. www.exampledatabase.com**
- D. www.anotherexample.com**

The reason www.tracerinfo.com is identified as the database system that does not truncate Social Security Numbers is due to its data handling practices and the types of records it maintains. Tracer Info is specifically designed for thorough investigative work, which includes access to complete and accurate personal identifying information such as Social Security Numbers (SSNs). In many cases, some databases may truncate or alter sensitive information to comply with privacy regulations or internal policies to prevent misuse of such data. However, Tracer Info's focus is on providing comprehensive data for private investigators, thereby retaining full SSNs for investigative purposes, making it a reliable source in this context. The other options may involve databases that do not guarantee the preservation of complete SSNs due to various processing standards or limitations within their systems, which prioritize data security over full accessibility. This can lead to truncated records to protect the privacy of individuals, impacting their effectiveness for thorough investigations requiring complete identifying details.

5. What must a licensee notify the commission about within 30 days?

- A. Any votes of disqualification**
- B. Any change in the qualifying agent identified in their application**
- C. Any audits or reviews performed on the company**
- D. Any job offers received**

A licensee is required to notify the commission about any change in the qualifying agent identified in their application within 30 days. This is crucial for maintaining accurate and current records regarding the individuals who have authority and responsibility for the licensee's operations. The qualifying agent is often responsible for ensuring compliance with legal and regulatory standards, and any change can significantly impact the licensee's standing and the trust that clients and the commission place in the agency. Prompt notification allows the commission to keep their records updated and ensures that the licensee continues to operate within the legal framework established for private investigators in Tennessee. The other scenarios, such as votes of disqualification or job offers, typically do not carry the same importance in terms of direct regulatory compliance. While audits and reviews are also significant, they are often part of more extensive reporting processes that do not require immediate notification in the same way as a change in the qualifying agent.

6. Which type of bankruptcy is designed for family farmers?

- A. Chapter 7**
- B. Chapter 11**
- C. Chapter 12**
- D. Chapter 13**

Chapter 12 bankruptcy is specifically designed to address the financial needs of family farmers and family fishermen. This type of bankruptcy allows these individuals to reorganize their debts while continuing to operate their farms or fishing businesses. Chapter 12 offers a streamlined process comparable to Chapter 13 but is tailored to the unique challenges and cash flow issues that family farmers face. This provision recognizes the agricultural industry's cyclical nature and allows farmers to create a repayment plan that is both manageable and reflective of their income and expenses. The eligibility requirements, which include debt limits and operational criteria, are structured to support family-run operations while providing them with the opportunity to restructure their debts. Other types of bankruptcy, such as Chapter 7, Chapter 11, and Chapter 13, serve different purposes. Chapter 7 is focused on liquidation of assets to pay creditors, Chapter 11 is typically used by businesses (including larger farming operations) for reorganization, and Chapter 13 is designed for individuals with regular income to create a repayment plan for their debts. However, none of these options specifically cater to the unique needs of family farmers in the way Chapter 12 does.

7. Which online database is used to check if a person is in jail or prison?

- A. WWW.VINELink.com**
- B. WWW.BOP.GOV**
- C. PACER**
- D. NCIC**

The correct choice for checking if a person is in jail or prison is B. WWW.BOP.GOV. This website is the official site for the Federal Bureau of Prisons and provides information about individuals who are currently incarcerated in federal facilities. It allows users to search for inmates by their name or other identifying information and gives access to details about their incarceration status, location, and sentence information. While other options may also provide useful information, they serve different purposes. For example, VINELink is primarily focused on victims' rights and offers notifications about changes in a person's status, but it is not exclusive to federal facilities. PACER is a service that provides electronic access to federal court documents and case information, relevant mainly for legal professionals tracking court cases rather than inmate status. NCIC, or the National Crime Information Center, is a database used by law enforcement agencies for a wide range of criminal justice information, but it does not function as a direct tool for the public to check inmate status. Thus, for the specific need of checking if someone is in jail or prison, WWW.BOP.GOV is the most appropriate resource.

8. What does countersurveillance aim to establish?

- A. Whether an individual is under investigation**
- B. The effectiveness of private investigation methods**
- C. If any electronic devices are compromised**
- D. The legal requirements for surveillance**

Countersurveillance primarily aims to determine whether an individual is being monitored or investigated by another party. This practice involves techniques and strategies to detect and thwart unwanted surveillance or tracking, ensuring that a person can safeguard their privacy and security. In many cases, this is crucial for individuals who suspect they are under scrutiny or in sensitive situations where their information or actions need protection. While identifying if someone is being investigated is essential, the other options focus on different aspects of surveillance and investigative methods. For example, assessing the effectiveness of private investigation methods is more about evaluating techniques rather than confirming surveillance actions against an individual. Similarly, checking if electronic devices are compromised pertains to digital security, which is a part of broader surveillance concerns but not the primary focus of countersurveillance. Legal requirements for surveillance involve understanding laws and regulations, which guide how surveillance should be conducted, but this is unrelated to identifying if surveillance is occurring. Thus, the main goal of countersurveillance is to establish whether surveillance on a person is taking place.

9. What must be recorded at the beginning of an interview?

- A. Witness's criminal history
- B. Date and location of the interview**
- C. Evidence gathered previously
- D. List of questions to be asked

Recording the date and location of the interview at the beginning is essential for multiple reasons. This documentation establishes a clear timeline and context for the information obtained during the interview. It allows anyone reviewing the evidence or the results of the interview to understand when and where it took place, which can be critical for legal proceedings or future investigations. The date helps to track the sequence of events, while the location provides insight into the atmosphere or circumstances surrounding the statements made by the witnesses or individuals involved. In contrast, while a witness's criminal history, evidence gathered previously, and a list of questions are important aspects of the investigative process, they do not pertain specifically to the foundational details necessary at the start of the interview. These elements can be considered later in the process, but establishing date and location upfront creates a solid framework for the interview itself.

10. When choosing a computer for private investigation work, which feature is considered the most essential?

- A. The largest hard drive
- B. The fastest processor**
- C. The most RAM
- D. The best graphic card

In the context of private investigation work, selecting a computer with the fastest processor is crucial for several reasons. Investigators often handle large volumes of data, conduct complex analysis, and run multiple applications simultaneously. A powerful processor enables faster data processing and improves the efficiency of tasks such as searching databases, running investigative software, or analyzing video and images, which can be time-sensitive. A fast processor also facilitates multitasking, allowing an investigator to work on various tasks without experiencing lag or slowdowns. This is particularly useful when managing surveillance footage or cross-referencing information from different sources. Therefore, opting for a computer with a high-performance processor significantly enhances productivity and effectiveness in investigative work. While a large hard drive, ample RAM, and a good graphic card may contribute to a computer's overall performance, the processor plays a pivotal role in direct task execution, making it the most essential feature for a private investigator.