

# Tennessee Private Investigator Licensing Practice Exam (Sample)

## Study Guide



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

**Copyright © 2025 by Examzify - A Kaluba Technologies Inc. product.**

**ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.**

**No part of this book may be reproduced or transferred in any form or by any means, graphic, electronic, or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, web distribution, taping, or by any information storage retrieval system, without the written permission of the author.**

**Notice: Examzify makes every reasonable effort to obtain from reliable sources accurate, complete, and timely information about this product.**

**SAMPLE**

## **Questions**

- 1. What is the recommended processor approach if you are skimping on price when purchasing a computer?**
  - A. Get the latest version**
  - B. Only buy used computers**
  - C. Choose a day-old version processor**
  - D. Buy the cheapest available**
- 2. What must individuals conducting financial investigations regarding credit ratings possess?**
  - A. A Private Investigator license**
  - B. Certification from a financial institution**
  - C. A background in financial analysis**
  - D. No license required**
- 3. How many days does an investigative company have to notify the commission about the death or termination of a private investigator?**
  - A. 10 days**
  - B. 14 days**
  - C. 20 days**
  - D. 30 days**
- 4. What is the penalty for working as an unlicensed private investigator in Tennessee?**
  - A. A fine of \$500**
  - B. It is a Class B misdemeanor**
  - C. Imprisonment for up to 6 months**
  - D. Community service for 100 hours**
- 5. Which of the following is NOT a typical online database for a private investigator?**
  - A. PACER**
  - B. FamilyTree Legends**
  - C. NCIC**
  - D. TLO**

- 6. Is a client contract necessary for private investigations in Tennessee?**
- A. Yes, it clarifies terms and expectations**
  - B. No, it is optional**
  - C. Yes, but only for criminal investigations**
  - D. No, as verbal agreements are sufficient**
- 7. What is the most common type of surveillance used by private investigators?**
- A. Covert surveillance**
  - B. Fixed-mobile surveillance**
  - C. Point of interest surveillance**
  - D. Online surveillance**
- 8. Where is fixed surveillance generally conducted from?**
- A. A public area**
  - B. An office space**
  - C. An apartment or house**
  - D. A vehicle**
- 9. What is required before someone can act as a private investigator?**
- A. They must have a bachelor's degree**
  - B. They must be a member of a professional organization**
  - C. They must obtain a license from the commission**
  - D. They must have previous law enforcement experience**
- 10. Which online database is utilized for Social Security tracing?**
- A. [www.tracersinfo.com](http://www.tracersinfo.com)**
  - B. [www.IRBsearch.com](http://www.IRBsearch.com)**
  - C. [www.merlindata.com](http://www.merlindata.com)**
  - D. [www.skipmax.com](http://www.skipmax.com)**

## **Answers**

SAMPLE

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

SAMPLE

## **Explanations**

SAMPLE



**1. What is the recommended processor approach if you are skimping on price when purchasing a computer?**

- A. Get the latest version**
- B. Only buy used computers**
- C. Choose a day-old version processor**
- D. Buy the cheapest available**

Opting for a day-old version processor strikes a balance between cost and performance. A day-old or slightly older version typically offers a significant performance capability at a reduced price compared to the latest models. This is because as new processors are released, the previous versions often drop in price while still maintaining excellent functionality for many tasks. This approach acknowledges that even though the processor is not the absolute latest model, it can still effectively run the software necessary for many applications, making it a sensible choice for those on a budget. By choosing this option, you avoid the pitfalls of compromising entirely on quality, which could happen with the cheapest available option, or potentially missing out on performance enhancements that newer models can provide. Other strategies, like solely buying used computers, might expose you to older technology that lacks the necessary support or performance, which could lead to additional costs in the long run. Meanwhile, getting the latest version could lead to overspending for features that are not immediately necessary.

**2. What must individuals conducting financial investigations regarding credit ratings possess?**

- A. A Private Investigator license**
- B. Certification from a financial institution**
- C. A background in financial analysis**
- D. No license required**

Individuals conducting financial investigations regarding credit ratings do not require a specific license. This is primarily because financial investigations related to credit ratings often involve analyzing publicly available financial data or documentation rather than engaging in activities that necessitate a private investigator license, such as surveillance or interviewing individuals. People in this field may indeed benefit from having a background in financial analysis to interpret complex financial information accurately, but this background is not a legal licensing requirement. Additionally, while certain certifications from financial institutions can enhance a professional's credibility and expertise, they are not mandatory for conducting credit investigation work. Hence, it is correct that no specific license is required for this type of financial investigation, which distinguishes it from work that requires formal licensing under private investigation law.

**3. How many days does an investigative company have to notify the commission about the death or termination of a private investigator?**

**A. 10 days**

**B. 14 days**

**C. 20 days**

**D. 30 days**

An investigative company is required to notify the commission within 14 days about the death or termination of a private investigator. This time frame is established to ensure that the commission is promptly informed of significant changes within licensed investigative firms, thereby maintaining updated records and regulatory oversight. Timeliness in communication helps to ensure that all operational and licensure statuses are accurate, which is essential for upholding the integrity of private investigations in Tennessee. While other time frames may seem reasonable, the specific requirement of 14 days is established to balance the need for prompt reporting with the operational realities faced by investigative companies.

**4. What is the penalty for working as an unlicensed private investigator in Tennessee?**

**A. A fine of \$500**

**B. It is a Class B misdemeanor**

**C. Imprisonment for up to 6 months**

**D. Community service for 100 hours**

In Tennessee, working as an unlicensed private investigator is classified as a Class B misdemeanor. This classification is significant because it outlines the legal implications of operating without the necessary license, indicating that the state takes the regulation of private investigation seriously. A Class B misdemeanor can carry penalties that include a fine and potential jail time, though the specific consequences can vary depending on the circumstances of the offense and the individual's prior record. Understanding this classification emphasizes the importance of compliance with licensing requirements for private investigators in Tennessee. It serves to protect the public by ensuring that practitioners meet established standards of training and ethics before engaging in investigative work. Thus, the implication of being charged with a Class B misdemeanor encompasses both legal repercussions and the reinforcement of professional standards within the field.

**5. 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 stands out as the correct answer because it primarily focuses on genealogical research, assisting individuals in tracing their ancestry and family history. This type of database is not commonly utilized by private investigators for their investigative work, which often requires legal, criminal, or financial information rather than personal ancestry data. In contrast, databases like PACER (Public Access to Court Electronic Records), NCIC (National Crime Information Center), and TLO (TransUnion's TLOxp) are specifically designed to aid investigators. PACER provides access to federal court records, NCIC offers a database of criminal justice information, and TLO is a robust investigative tool that provides comprehensive background checks and information retrieval. Given this distinction in purpose and function, FamilyTree Legends does not align with the typical databases that a private investigator would use in their professional activities.

**6. Is a client contract necessary for private investigations in Tennessee?**

**A. Yes, it clarifies terms and expectations**

**B. No, it is optional**

**C. Yes, but only for criminal investigations**

**D. No, as verbal agreements are sufficient**

A client contract is essential for private investigations in Tennessee as it clearly outlines the terms and expectations of the relationship between the investigator and the client. This contract serves several important purposes: it establishes the scope of work, specifies fees and payment terms, and defines the responsibilities of both parties. By having a written agreement, both the private investigator and the client can refer to the contract in case of any disputes or misunderstandings, ensuring that both parties have a mutual understanding of their obligations. Additionally, a contract can help protect the privacy and confidentiality of the client's information, which is crucial in the field of private investigation. It also provides a formal record of the agreement that can be beneficial for legal reasons if issues arise during the investigation. Thus, having a client contract is not just a good business practice but also a safeguard for both the investigator and the client.

**7. What is the most common type of surveillance used by private investigators?**

- A. Covert surveillance**
- B. Fixed-mobile surveillance**
- C. Point of interest surveillance**
- D. Online surveillance**

The most common type of surveillance used by private investigators is fixed-mobile surveillance. This method combines stationary observation, where investigators maintain a position for a certain period to gather information about a subject, with mobile surveillance, where they follow or track the subject's movements. This combination allows private investigators to gather comprehensive data about activities, behaviors, and interactions in various locations. Fixed-mobile surveillance is particularly useful because it provides flexibility and adaptability. Investigators can start with a fixed position to observe a subject's routine and then transition to mobile surveillance to capture dynamic situations, such as changes in the subject's behavior or interactions with others. This multifaceted approach can lead to more effective and thorough information gathering, which is critical for the successful completion of investigations. In contrast, other methods like covert surveillance may be less common in terms of frequency of use because they require more meticulous planning to remain hidden. Point of interest surveillance focuses on a specific location, which may not capture the full range of a subject's movements or behaviors. Online surveillance pertains more to monitoring digital activities, which, while increasingly relevant, does not cover the in-person observational skills necessary for many private investigation scenarios. Thus, fixed-mobile surveillance is recognized as the most commonly employed method in the field.

**8. Where is fixed surveillance generally conducted from?**

- A. A public area**
- B. An office space**
- C. An apartment or house**
- D. A vehicle**

Fixed surveillance is typically conducted from an apartment or house because these locations offer the advantage of being stationary and providing a discreet environment for investigators to monitor a target's activities. An apartment or house can be set up with proper vantage points to observe without drawing attention, which is crucial for the effectiveness of the surveillance operation. This setting allows for extended monitoring over time without the need to move around, which can risk detection. In contrast, while public areas can sometimes serve as surveillance points, they do not provide the same level of cover or stability as a dedicated location. An office space may lack the appropriate view or concealment needed for effective surveillance, and a vehicle, though mobile, also comes with the risk of being observed and does not allow for long-term monitoring in a single location. Therefore, conducting surveillance from an apartment or house is often the most strategic choice.

**9. What is required before someone can act as a private investigator?**

- A. They must have a bachelor's degree**
- B. They must be a member of a professional organization**
- C. They must obtain a license from the commission**
- D. They must have previous law enforcement experience**

To act as a private investigator in Tennessee, obtaining a license from the commission is essential. This licensing process serves a critical purpose: it ensures that individuals engaged in private investigation adhere to specific regulations and standards set by the state. Licensing helps to protect the public by ensuring that investigators have undergone the necessary training and background checks, thus promoting professionalism and accountability in the field. While having a bachelor's degree, membership in a professional organization, or previous law enforcement experience may benefit a private investigator and enhance their skills, these factors are not legally mandated prerequisites for performing the job. The core requirement remains the acquisition of a license, which serves as the official endorsement by the state that an individual is qualified to operate as a private investigator.

**10. Which online database is utilized for Social Security tracing?**

- A. [www.tracersinfo.com](http://www.tracersinfo.com)**
- B. [www.IRBsearch.com](http://www.IRBsearch.com)**
- C. [www.merlindata.com](http://www.merlindata.com)**
- D. [www.skipmax.com](http://www.skipmax.com)**

The correct choice emphasizes that IRBsearch.com is specifically designed to assist in tracing individuals, including Social Security tracing. This platform offers access to a wide range of public records and database searches, which can include Social Security number validation and related tracing capabilities. This makes it a valuable tool for private investigators when they are conducting background checks, skip tracing, or locating individuals through various means. While the other databases listed may offer useful information and advanced search options, they are not primarily focused on Social Security tracing to the same extent. This distinction is crucial for private investigators who need reliable resources tailored to specific investigative needs, particularly in tracing someone's whereabouts or identity linked to their Social Security number.