

# Tennessee Private Investigator Licensing Practice Exam (Sample)

## Study Guide



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

**This is a sample study guide. To access the full version with hundreds of 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. Don't worry about getting everything right, 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, and take breaks to retain information better.**

## 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.**

## 7. Use Other Tools

**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!**

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## **Questions**

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- 1. What is one method private investigators may use to verify a person's identity?**
  - A. Conducting interviews with associates.**
  - B. Using social media exclusively.**
  - C. Guessing from external appearances.**
  - D. Only through financial records.**
  
- 2. What might happen if an applicant has a felony conviction?**
  - A. They will always be accepted**
  - B. They may still apply regardless**
  - C. They may be disqualified depending on the conviction**
  - D. They must appeal to the board for review**
  
- 3. What is the minimum age to work as an apprentice for a private investigator in Tennessee?**
  - A. 16 years old**
  - B. 18 years old**
  - C. 21 years old**
  - D. It varies by county**
  
- 4. What is one reason a private investigator might be required to report to the commission?**
  - A. The purchase of new equipment**
  - B. The acquisition of a new office location**
  - C. Changes in the qualifying agent**
  - D. The addition of new staff members**
  
- 5. What is one of the main areas of interest for county courthouses?**
  - A. Civil files**
  - B. Criminal profiling**
  - C. Investigation techniques**
  - D. Background checks**

**6. Which add-on is NOT typically recommended for a computer used in investigative work?**

- A. Color printer**
- B. External hard drive**
- C. Wireless router**
- D. CD-DVD burner**

**7. What is a requirement to be a trainer or instructor for Private Investigator training?**

- A. 25 years of age**
- B. 3 years of related supervisory experience**
- C. No experience requirement needed**
- D. Must be a licensed investigator for at least 5 years**

**8. According to the law, what happens to trash that is placed at the front of a property?**

- A. It remains the owner's property**
- B. It is considered abandoned property**
- C. It is illegal to collect from it**
- D. It becomes public property after one week**

**9. What is the definition of a subpoena?**

- A. A request for information from a private investigator**
- B. A command requiring a person to appear in court**
- C. A type of surveillance permit**
- D. A legal document used to obtain evidence**

**10. Which physical characteristic should ideally be avoided in a car for surveillance?**

- A. Earth-tone colors**
- B. Containing more than four doors**
- C. Black color with tinted windows**
- D. 8-cylinder engine**

## **Answers**

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

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## **Explanations**

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**1. What is one method private investigators may use to verify a person's identity?**

- A. Conducting interviews with associates.**
- B. Using social media exclusively.**
- C. Guessing from external appearances.**
- D. Only through financial records.**

Conducting interviews with associates is a reliable method for private investigators to verify a person's identity. This approach allows the investigator to gather firsthand information from people who know the individual, which can confirm or clarify the person's identity based on their relationships, history, and any relevant details that associates might provide. By engaging with associates, investigators can gain insights into the person's habits, background, and any discrepancies in their stated identity. This method of verification can also help establish credibility and provide context that may not be available through other means of identification, such as documents or records. In contrast, relying solely on social media can provide only a limited view of a person's identity, often influenced by how individuals choose to present themselves online. Guessing from external appearances lacks any factual basis and can lead to incorrect assumptions. Lastly, while financial records can assist in verifying identity, they should be part of a broader investigation that includes more personal interactions and context to ensure accuracy.

**2. What might happen if an applicant has a felony conviction?**

- A. They will always be accepted**
- B. They may still apply regardless**
- C. They may be disqualified depending on the conviction**
- D. They must appeal to the board for review**

If an applicant has a felony conviction, they may be disqualified from obtaining a private investigator license depending on the nature of the conviction. This is because licensing boards evaluate the character and fitness of applicants, and certain felony offenses may be viewed as indicative of a lack of integrity or trustworthiness necessary for a position that requires private access to sensitive information. The assessment generally includes considering the severity of the felony, the time elapsed since the conviction, and whether the applicant has shown evidence of rehabilitation. While some convictions are more likely to lead to disqualification, applicants with certain felonies may still have viable pathways to obtaining a license if they can effectively demonstrate rehabilitation or if their conviction is not considered directly relevant to their ability to perform the duties of a private investigator. In this context, the possibility of applying even with a felony conviction exists, yet the outcome would hinge critically on the specifics of that conviction, thus making it essential for applicants to understand the implications of their criminal history on their licensing prospects.

**3. What is the minimum age to work as an apprentice for a private investigator in Tennessee?**

- A. 16 years old**
- B. 18 years old**
- C. 21 years old**
- D. It varies by county**

In Tennessee, the minimum age to work as an apprentice for a private investigator is 18 years old. This regulation is established to ensure that those engaging in investigative work possess a certain level of maturity and understanding of the legal and ethical responsibilities involved in the profession. Being 18 years old typically signifies that an individual has reached adulthood and can be held legally accountable for their actions, which is particularly important in a field that deals with sensitive information and the law. Other age options, like 16 or even 21 years old, do not align with the established regulations in Tennessee. A minimum age of 16 would allow individuals who may not yet have the requisite maturity for the responsibilities of an apprentice, while a requirement of 21 might unnecessarily restrict qualified candidates who are ready for training at age 18. The "It varies by county" option is also inaccurate, as the state law sets a uniform minimum age across Tennessee rather than allowing for county-specific variations.

**4. What is one reason a private investigator might be required to report to the commission?**

- A. The purchase of new equipment**
- B. The acquisition of a new office location**
- C. Changes in the qualifying agent**
- D. The addition of new staff members**

A private investigator is required to report to the commission regarding changes in the qualifying agent because the qualifying agent plays a crucial role in overseeing the operations of a private investigation agency. This individual is often responsible for ensuring compliance with state laws and regulations, thus their appointment or removal can significantly impact the agency's compliance status. It is essential for regulatory bodies to maintain accurate records of who is overseeing the investigatory practices of private firms to ensure accountability and ethical conduct within the industry. The other options, while important for the operations of a private investigation agency, do not necessarily require formal reporting to the commission. The purchase of new equipment, acquisition of a new office location, and addition of new staff members are operational decisions that do not directly affect the regulatory oversight as much as changes in the qualifying agent do. These operational aspects can typically be managed internally without the need for formal notification unless they directly relate to compliance with legal standards.

**5. What is one of the main areas of interest for county courthouses?**

- A. Civil files**
- B. Criminal profiling**
- C. Investigation techniques**
- D. Background checks**

County courthouses primarily handle a wide range of civil matters, making civil files a significant area of interest. Civil files include various legal documents pertaining to disputes between individuals or organizations, such as contracts, property disputes, and family law cases like divorces and child custody. The presence of civil files in courthouses is essential because they serve as the official record of civil litigation, helping to maintain transparency in legal proceedings. These files are accessible to the public, allowing individuals to engage with the legal system, conduct research, and understand their rights and obligations. This focus on civil matters differentiates courthouses from other areas like criminal profiling, which involves psychological assessments and is typically the domain of law enforcement or criminal psychology professionals rather than the court itself. Similarly, investigation techniques and background checks are more relevant to the work of investigators rather than the function of courthouses directly.

**6. Which add-on is NOT typically recommended for a computer used in investigative work?**

- A. Color printer**
- B. External hard drive**
- C. Wireless router**
- D. CD-DVD burner**

The selection of an add-on that is NOT typically recommended for a computer used in investigative work is guided by the specific needs and tasks commonly encountered in this field. A wireless router, while useful for general network connectivity, may pose security issues critical in investigative scenarios. Attackers can exploit wireless networks, making it challenging to maintain the confidentiality and security of sensitive information gathered during investigations. In contrast, the other options support the operational efficiency and security of investigative work. A color printer enhances documentation quality, which can be vital for presenting case findings. An external hard drive provides additional storage and backup options for sensitive data, ensuring that files are safely preserved and accessible. A CD-DVD burner also serves practical purposes in terms of archiving important information and sharing case materials securely. Thus, while a wireless router has its advantages, the potential security risks it introduces make it less favorable compared to the other listed add-ons in the context of investigative work.

**7. What is a requirement to be a trainer or instructor for Private Investigator training?**

- A. 25 years of age**
- B. 3 years of related supervisory experience**
- C. No experience requirement needed**
- D. Must be a licensed investigator for at least 5 years**

To be a trainer or instructor for Private Investigator training, having three years of related supervisory experience is a key requirement. This experience demonstrates that the individual possesses a solid understanding of not only the practical aspects of private investigation but also the ability to manage and guide others in this field. Supervisory experience indicates that the instructor has likely encountered various scenarios relevant to the profession, can effectively communicate critical concepts, and is familiar with the regulatory and operational standards of private investigation. Thus, this requirement helps ensure that the training provided is effective and rooted in real-world experience, equipping trainees with the necessary skills and knowledge to succeed in their roles as private investigators. The other options do not align with the established qualifications necessary for this role, as age alone, lack of experience requirements, or only holding a license do not ensure the comprehensive expertise and knowledge essential for instructing future investigators.

**8. According to the law, what happens to trash that is placed at the front of a property?**

- A. It remains the owner's property**
- B. It is considered abandoned property**
- C. It is illegal to collect from it**
- D. It becomes public property after one week**

In Tennessee, once trash is placed at the front of a property, it is generally considered abandoned property. This is based on the legal principle that once waste is discarded by its owner, it relinquishes ownership. The act of putting trash at the curb for collection indicates an intention to dispose of it and not retain any rights to it. This designation allows other parties, including private investigators or trash collectors, to access and potentially gather information from the discarded items, as they are no longer the property of the original owner. It also highlights the legal concept that once something is abandoned, it can be treated differently than personal property, which retains ownership rights until explicitly transferred. In contrast, the options suggesting that trash remains the owner's property or is illegal to collect from reflect misunderstandings about property rights regarding waste. Once trash is placed out for collection, it is no longer considered owned by the individual, as their intent is to dispose of it. The idea that trash becomes public property after a certain time period is also misleading, as the transition to abandoned status occurs immediately upon disposal.

## 9. What is the definition of a subpoena?

- A. A request for information from a private investigator
- B. A command requiring a person to appear in court**
- C. A type of surveillance permit
- D. A legal document used to obtain evidence

A subpoena is a legal document that commands an individual to appear in court as a witness or to produce documents, records, or evidence pertinent to a case. This definition underscores the legal authority of a subpoena, emphasizing its role as a tool utilized within the judicial system to ensure that witnesses can be brought forward and necessary evidence can be presented during legal proceedings. The significance lies in its enforceability; failure to comply with a subpoena can result in penalties, such as fines or even arrest. In contrast, a request for information from a private investigator does not carry the same legal weight or obligation as a subpoena. A type of surveillance permit is related to permission for observation and does not pertain to court appearances. A legal document used to obtain evidence is somewhat closer in concept, but it does not specifically encompass the requirement to appear in court, which is a key defining feature of a subpoena. Thus, the essence of a subpoena is its role as a legal command to appear, which distinguishes it clearly from the other options presented.

## 10. Which physical characteristic should ideally be avoided in a car for surveillance?

- A. Earth-tone colors
- B. Containing more than four doors
- C. Black color with tinted windows**
- D. 8-cylinder engine

Choosing a car for surveillance requires a focus on blending in and minimizing attention. The characteristic of having a black color with tinted windows is particularly disadvantageous for surveillance purposes. A car that is entirely black tends to attract scrutiny as it stands out more than neutral or earth-tone colors, which are commonly found in many areas and can help a vehicle blend into different environments. Additionally, heavily tinted windows can make a vehicle appear suspicious, as it often raises questions about what might be happening inside and can hinder visibility for both the surveillant and anyone observing from outside. In contrast, earth-tone colors are less conspicuous and can help the vehicle remain unnoticed. A vehicle with more than four doors does not inherently attract attention; rather, it serves practical purposes for transporting equipment or additional team members if needed. An 8-cylinder engine, while it may indicate more power, does not in itself signal a vehicle's suitability for surveillance as performance is not as critical as discretion in this context. Thus, the black color with tinted windows is the standout feature to avoid for effective undercover operations in surveillance scenarios.

# 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://tennessee-privateinvestigator.examzify.com>**

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

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