

# USPS Postal Support Employee (PSE) Practice Exam (Sample)

## Study Guide



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## **Questions**

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- 1. What must be true for a parcel to be classified as an outside parcel?**
  - A. It must weigh over 50lbs**
  - B. It cannot be processed in postal sacks due to size or shape**
  - C. It must be sent internationally**
  - D. It must be sealed with tape**
- 2. What is the recommended maximum weight for Machinable parcels?**
  - A. 10 pounds**
  - B. 20 pounds**
  - C. 35 pounds**
  - D. 50 pounds**
- 3. What is the maximum weight for Library Mail?**
  - A. 60 pounds**
  - B. 70 pounds**
  - C. 50 pounds**
  - D. 80 pounds**
- 4. What are periodicals classified as?**
  - A. Books and journals**
  - B. Magazines and newspapers**
  - C. Reports and documents**
  - D. Newsletters and bulletins**
- 5. Do return receipts for merchandise include insurance coverage?**
  - A. Yes**
  - B. No**
  - C. Only for high-value items**
  - D. Only if requested**

- 6. Which of the following is a surcharge that may be added to a Priority piece?**
- A. Dimensional weight**
  - B. Delivery fee**
  - C. Handling charge**
  - D. Residential surcharge**
- 7. Which technique in active listening is used to bring the message into greater focus?**
- A. Summarizing**
  - B. Clarifying**
  - C. Reflecting**
  - D. Feedback**
- 8. How long can someone wait to get a PO Box before they are classified under General Delivery?**
- A. 15 days**
  - B. 30 days**
  - C. 45 days**
  - D. 60 days**
- 9. Can a delivery confirmation piece be sent to a FPO address?**
- A. Yes**
  - B. No**
  - C. Only with extra fees**
  - D. Only if marked as priority**
- 10. When is an audit of a clerk with individual accountability typically performed?**
- A. Every month**
  - B. Every 6 months**
  - C. Every 4 months or 120 days**
  - D. Every year**

## **Answers**

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

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## **Explanations**

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**1. What must be true for a parcel to be classified as an outside parcel?**

**A. It must weigh over 50lbs**

**B. It cannot be processed in postal sacks due to size or shape**

**C. It must be sent internationally**

**D. It must be sealed with tape**

For a parcel to be classified as an outside parcel, it is essential that it cannot be processed in postal sacks due to its size or shape. This classification is typically used for items that exceed the standard dimensions for parcels that can be bundled together for easier handling and transportation. Such items are often too large, bulky, or oddly shaped to fit into the standard postal processing equipment, which requires that they be treated as separate from regular parcels that can be accommodated in sacks. The focus on size and shape is crucial here because it dictates how the item can be handled throughout the postal system. Items classified as outside parcels require special attention because traditional processing methods may not apply, impacting how they are packaged and shipped. The other options relate to specific characteristics that do not fundamentally determine the classification of a parcel as outside. For example, weight alone does not classify a parcel as outside; various items under that weight can still be within the standard processing categories. Similarly, the need to be sent internationally, or being sealed with tape, does not inherently connect to external classification; domestic parcels might also fall under the same rules if they are oversize. Thus, the criteria focus on the processing capabilities of the postal system concerning the parcel's dimensions.

**2. What is the recommended maximum weight for Machinable parcels?**

**A. 10 pounds**

**B. 20 pounds**

**C. 35 pounds**

**D. 50 pounds**

The recommended maximum weight for machinable parcels is indeed 35 pounds. This classification is important for ensuring that parcels can be processed efficiently by automated machinery within the postal system. Machinable parcels are designed to meet specific size and shape criteria, allowing them to be sorted and handled more easily, which in turn speeds up the delivery process. Choosing 35 pounds as the maximum weight aligns with the operational standards set by the USPS, which aim to balance efficiency in handling parcels while maintaining safety standards for the machines and workers involved in processing. This weight limit allows for a broad range of typical shipments while ensuring that packages remain manageable for automated systems. Understanding this classification and its weight restriction is crucial for ensuring compliance with postal regulations and enhancing the overall effectiveness of the mail delivery system.

### 3. What is the maximum weight for Library Mail?

- A. 60 pounds
- B. 70 pounds**
- C. 50 pounds
- D. 80 pounds

The maximum weight for Library Mail is indeed 70 pounds. Library Mail is a special category of mail that allows for the shipment of books, sound recordings, and other educational materials at a discounted rate. This service is primarily aimed at schools, libraries, and other educational institutions. The weight limit of 70 pounds allows for the inclusion of multiple items or heavier materials in a single shipment, making it easier for libraries and educational institutions to send and receive large volumes of items. Choosing any other weight limit would not align with the established regulations set forth by the United States Postal Service for Library Mail, which is specifically defined as having a maximum weight allowance of 70 pounds.

### 4. What are periodicals classified as?

- A. Books and journals
- B. Magazines and newspapers**
- C. Reports and documents
- D. Newsletters and bulletins

Periodicals are classified primarily as magazines and newspapers. This classification encompasses publications that are released on a regular schedule, such as weekly, monthly, or quarterly, providing updated content to their audiences. Magazines typically cover a wide range of topics, catering to various interests, while newspapers focus on current events, news stories, and local community information. This combination highlights the essence of periodicals as sources that inform and entertain readers consistently over time. The other choices, while they refer to various forms of written content, do not specifically capture the regularity and update frequency that defines periodicals. Books and journals, for example, often do not become part of the same category as periodicals because they may not be published regularly. Reports and documents encompass significant findings or communications and are not necessarily released on a regular schedule. Similarly, newsletters and bulletins present important information but may not fit the broader, more traditional definition of periodicals as widely recognized publications like magazines and newspapers.

### 5. Do return receipts for merchandise include insurance coverage?

- A. Yes
- B. No**
- C. Only for high-value items
- D. Only if requested

Return receipts for merchandise do not include insurance coverage. The return receipt itself is an acknowledgment of delivery — it provides evidence that the item was received by the intended recipient but does not provide any protection against loss or damage. Insurance is a separate service that can be purchased when mailing an item, and it must be specifically requested if desired. Therefore, it is important to understand that while you can use return receipts to confirm delivery, they do not offer any insurance benefits, making the answer clear and straightforward.

**6. Which of the following is a surcharge that may be added to a Priority piece?**

- A. Dimensional weight**
- B. Delivery fee**
- C. Handling charge**
- D. Residential surcharge**

Dimensional weight is the correct answer because it pertains to how the postage for a package is calculated based not only on its actual weight but also on its size. The USPS uses dimensional weight pricing for Priority Mail to ensure that shipping costs reflect the space a package occupies in transit. This means that if a package is large but lightweight, the postal service will charge based on the dimensional weight to account for the extra shipping resources required for larger packages. In contrast, while there are fees related to delivery and handling, they typically do not apply specifically to Priority Mail in the same direct manner as dimensional weight does. Additionally, a residential surcharge may apply to certain delivery addresses but is often associated with different types of services, meaning it is not a general surcharge for all Priority pieces. Thus, dimensional weight is specifically designed to be factored into the pricing strategy for Priority Mail, making it the most relevant choice in this context.

**7. Which technique in active listening is used to bring the message into greater focus?**

- A. Summarizing**
- B. Clarifying**
- C. Reflecting**
- D. Feedback**

The technique used to bring the message into greater focus is clarifying. This method involves asking questions or paraphrasing what the speaker has said to ensure understanding and to highlight specific points. When a listener seeks clarification, they help to remove ambiguity from the conversation. This encourages the speaker to elaborate on their ideas or feelings, making it easier for the listener to grasp the essential elements of the message. By focusing on clarification, the listener can engage more deeply, ensuring that they are fully grasping the intent and content of the communication, which is essential for effective interaction and resolution of issues. This technique can significantly enhance the quality of dialogue, leading to a more accurate interpretation of the speaker's thoughts or emotions.

**8. How long can someone wait to get a PO Box before they are classified under General Delivery?**

- A. 15 days
- B. 30 days**
- C. 45 days
- D. 60 days

When an individual rents a PO Box and does not pick it up within the designated timeframe, they may be classified under General Delivery if the requirements are not met. In this instance, the correct timeframe for an individual to wait before they are classified as under General Delivery is 30 days. This policy ensures that the USPS can manage and allocate resources effectively, as PO Boxes are intended for secure, consistent delivery of mail for individuals who need a stable address. If an individual has not claimed their PO Box within 30 days, the USPS assumes they no longer require it, allowing the box to be made available for other customers. This policy helps maintain the availability of PO Boxes for the community, balancing accessibility with the need for timely usage.

**9. Can a delivery confirmation piece be sent to a FPO address?**

- A. Yes
- B. No**
- C. Only with extra fees
- D. Only if marked as priority

Delivery confirmation can be a bit tricky when it comes to military addresses, such as FPO (Fleet Post Office) addresses. The primary reason that sending a delivery confirmation piece to a FPO address is not allowed is that delivery confirmation is designed for domestic shipments within the United States. While FPO addresses may utilize USPS services, they are part of the international mailing system as they are linked to military postal services. Items sent to FPO addresses generally involve different handling and processing compared to domestic deliveries, and the nature of military mail means that many of the tracking and confirmation services available for standard domestic shipments do not apply. The delivery confirmation service is typically used for packages that can be tracked and confirmed within the U.S. postal system, while FPO mail might not provide the same level of tracking capabilities. Thus, acknowledging the unique requirements and limitations of military mail services, delivery confirmation is not available for items sent to FPO addresses.

**10. When is an audit of a clerk with individual accountability typically performed?**

**A. Every month**

**B. Every 6 months**

**C. Every 4 months or 120 days**

**D. Every year**

An audit of a clerk with individual accountability is typically performed every 4 months or 120 days to ensure accountability and accuracy in the handling of mail and funds. This timeframe allows for regular checks to be conducted, ensuring that any discrepancies can be identified and addressed in a timely manner. Conducting audits too frequently, such as every month, may place an unnecessary burden on the clerks and the resources available for audits, while less frequent audits could lead to longer periods of potential mismanagement going unnoticed. The 4-month interval strikes a balance, allowing for sufficient oversight while also ensuring that clerks remain accountable for their transactions and responsibilities in a consistent manner.