

## Sample Detention Sergeant Pre-Employment Test Questions

The position of Sergeant is the first-level of supervision at the Doña Ana County Detention Center.

The Doña Ana County Detention Center strives to hire the best candidate for every position. Our goal is to fill each job with a person who is well-qualified, has an interest in the job, and who will be committed to a career in the field.

As a Sergeant, you would be responsible for training new Detention Officers, maintaining in-service training, and providing supervision of Detention Officers under your assigned shift.

Test-taking can cause angst for many individuals. To help you conquer any doubts that you may have, we have provided the following sample test you may review as many times as you need before you take the actual Sergeant's examination.

The sample test questions cover the same five parts that are contained in the actual test you will take if you meet the minimum qualifications for the Sergeant's position:

- Attention to Detail
- Adult Correctional Procedures
- Reading Comprehension
- Human Motivation, Employee Training and Supervision
- English Usage and Report Writing

Answering the sample test questions will give you an idea of what to expect if you qualify and apply for the Sergeant's position at the Doña Ana County Detention Center. Let's get started.

## Attention to Detail

This part of the test requires you to study a photo for one minute and then answer four questions about the photo without being able to look at the picture again.

Scroll down to view the photo.

You have one minute to view this photo. When you are done, click to advance to the questions:



1. The inmate is wearing a striped orange uniform with lettering on the back of the shirt.
  - A. True
  - B. False
  
2. There are two officers and one has a weapon drawn.
  - A. True
  - B. False, there are three officers
  - C. Neither officer has a weapon drawn
  
3. The inmate has some articles of clothing removed. They include:
  - A. Shirt and jacket
  - B. One sock and two shoes
  - C. Two socks and two shoes
  - D. Orange uniform and tee shirt

### **Adult Correctional Procedures:**

As a first-line supervisor, it is important that you understand adult correctional procedures. The following segment of the test gives you a preview of the procedural information you need to know and understand if selected to be a Sergeant.

Questions 4 – 6 are examples of Doña Ana County Detention Center Policy and Procedure. Policy and Procedure in a Detention facility must be strictly upheld in order to protect the safety of inmates and officers. Please answer each question to the best of your ability for each Detention scenario.

4. During the transport of detainees, the Officer shall:
  - A. never allow anyone near or in the vehicle, unless it is a friend or family member of the detainee who is being transported to a court hearing
  - B. never make unscheduled stops for personal or other business
  - C. keep a weapon under the seat, in a glove box, or another area within reach in order to protect themselves from the detainee in the event of assault or attempted escape
  - D. All of the above
  
5. In the event that an emergency situation arises and requires the evacuation of any or all of the facility, the Fire Department, Sheriff's Department, and Detention Staff may conduct an investigation. After reading each of the following components of the investigation process, select the answer that is incorrect:
  - A. The area shall be treated as a crime scene until the investigation is complete
  - B. Alternative housing for detainees from the affected areas may be needed

- C. FEMA will be called in for every emergency situation
  - D. In situations involving assaults; detainees and or staff members will be given the opportunity to bring criminal charges against their assailant(s)
6. If a minor disturbance escalates to a major disturbance or a riot situation occurs, the Pod Control Officer must report to Master Control the following:
- A. The location and the number of detainees involved
  - B. The names of detainees involved (if known)
  - C. Weapons (if known)
  - D. All of the above

## **Reading Comprehension:**

As a Sergeant it is important that you are able to read and comprehend a variety of documents including arrest reports, medical reports and policies and procedures. This section of the test will assess your abilities to read and understand information.

Read the following selection concerning the purpose and duties of the Disposition Officer and answer the questions pertaining to what you have read.

Purpose of Disposition Officer: The disposition officers are responsible for the accurate and timely documentation of court dispositions, parole and probation hearings, servicing of criminal summons, scheduling associated court dates, and sentence calculations when applicable.

Daily duties include but are not limited to:

- Ensure all booking paperwork and files are circulated to the dispositions staff
  - Take care of other agency requests for information by phone or by fax
  - Address all incoming faxes from all courts
  - Respond or facilitate court ordered treatment programs with Adult Probation and the Public Defender's office
  - Circulate Court Order Forensic Evaluation to Medical and Reception departments
  - Serve all incoming documents from all agencies such as: Bench Warrants, Arrest Warrants, Target Notices, Criminal Summons, Temporary Orders of Protection, Orders to Show Cause, Dissolution of Marriage, and Civil Claims
  - Sentencing calculation on all District Court Judgment and Sentencing documents
  - Email commitment reports to the District Attorney's office, Public Defender's Office, and District Court
  - Monitor and address all aspects of fugitives from justice
7. Based on the information you have just read, the main subject of this job function includes:
- A. Accurate and timely documentation
  - B. Doing the work of other agencies
  - C. Spending too much time on email, faxing, talking on the phone, and running reports
  - D. A and C

8. In the last bullet point under daily duties the phrase “fugitives from justice” is listed. Select the best definition for this phrase:
- A. Any person who is running from the law because they don’t want to be caught and convicted of the crime they just committed
  - B. Any person who has fled from any state to avoid prosecution for a crime or to avoid giving testimony in any criminal proceeding
  - C. Any person who has a criminal past and keeps it secret
  - D. Any person whose identity is kept private by the witness protection program
9. According to the duties listed, as a Disposition Officer, you would be expected to serve warrants and other court ordered summons:
- A. True
  - B. False

### **Human Motivation, Employee Training and Supervision:**

As a Sergeant you will be responsible to supervise and lead a group of Detention Officers. You will monitor their performance, correct behavior and provide leadership to them. See what you already know about leadership.

Effective leaders have a focus and a mission for their organization. Effective leaders communicate the focus and the roadmap to achieving the mission, and will actively include each part the organization to play a part in the success. The effective leader will recognize the strengths of each individual employee and/or team and delegate tasks accordingly.

10. The advantage for the employee is:
- A. Employees have a sense of value when they are asked to participate in the success of the organization based on their own unique skill set
  - B. Employees can recognize the need for the leader assign the work to others
  - C. Employees all agree on the roadmap
  - D. All of the above

11. When identifying goals within a team it is reasonable to consider:
- A. Goals that individuals agree on the most
  - B. Goals that have attainable and measurable results
  - C. Goals that have multiple possible outcomes
  - D. All of the above
12. One way to successfully identify the specific tasks on a project is to first identify:
- A. What the simplest tasks are
  - B. Who on the team is available to do the work
  - C. Where the project stands today and the desired outcome at the end
  - D. The tasks that were done in the past and repeat those tasks
13. Leaders must take disciplinary actions when warranted. Discipline in the workplace could be viewed as:
- A. Punitive always
  - B. A motivator to improve performance
  - C. The best way to get the attention of an insubordinate employee
  - D. The best way to prepare for a performance evaluation using documentation

An effective leader will recognize when an employee is failing at a task by identifying a skill deficiency or a will deficiency. In other words, the leader may ask herself; "Does the employee know and understand what it takes to complete the task?" indicating that a skill is needed in order to complete the task, and; "Does the employee have the motivation and drive to complete the task?" indicating that the will of the employee is a factor in completing the task.

14. When the effective leader identifies a skill deficiency, the best solution is:
- A. To take disciplinary action immediately
  - B. To provide training so the employee can successfully learn the skill
  - C. To pay more attention to the employee on all assigned tasks to check for mistakes
  - D. All of the above
15. When the effective leader identifies a will deficiency, the least effective solutions would include:
- A. Find out what the roadblocks are by opening up communication with the employee in order to solve the issue
  - B. Take disciplinary action immediately
  - C. Talk to Human Resources about why they hired the employee
  - D. B and C

## **English Usage and Report Writing:**

This is the last section. You're almost done with the sample test. At the Detention Center you will need to write a variety of short reports that others can understand. In some cases, those reports can become part of the court process. Errors in report writing can not only be embarrassing but could lead to inappropriate processing of a detainee. This section will help you identify your understanding and skills in using the English language and expressing yourself effectively.

16. County facility vehicles \_\_\_\_\_ be \_\_\_\_\_ for official \_\_\_\_\_ only.
- A. Can, taking, business
  - B. Will, use, businesses
  - C. Shall, used, business
  - D. None of the above

A report is a formal written presentation of facts. An opinion or judgment can be included into a report, although it must be clearly written so that there is no doubt by those reading the report that it is separated from the fact-based section of the report.

17. There are a couple of different ways that this can be accomplished:
- A. Attach a separate supplemental page entitled "Not for court use"
  - B. Attach a separate supplemental page entitled "Opinions and Conclusions"
  - C. Send the opinions on an email rather than include them with the report
  - D. A and B

Some words seem to have a special appeal to Detention Officers when they are writing reports. One of the least descriptive and ambiguous words in the English language is "indicate". A person can "indicate" by saying something, shaking their head, pointing, and by glancing around. A person can "indicate" directly or indirectly through the use of a facial expression or even sign language. For accurate, effective report-writing, the word "indicate" and others like it are not descriptive enough. The key things to remember with report writing include but are not limited to:

- how, when, what, who, and where
  - chronological and logical order of events
  - names, numbers, and action-specific words
  - clear and to-the-point sentence structure
18. Take a look at the following examples and choose the best sentence for report writing:
- A. Jones indicated that he would not submit to custody
  - B. The behavior pointed towards hostility
  - C. When I talked to Jones he wasn't acting very cooperative
  - D. Jones said, "You aint taking me, punk"

19. Choose the best sentence for report writing:

- A. The victim was contacted at his home
- B. I felt I should contact Jones that's why I did
- C. I called Jones at his home
- D. None of the above

20. Choose the best sentence for report writing:

- A. I detected the odor of burning marijuana
- B. I smelled burning marijuana
- C. It is important to note that there may be illegal drugs in the cell
- D. I observed that there was what looked like paraphernalia in the cell

How did you do? Don't be discouraged if you didn't do as well as you thought. You can return to this sample test as many times as you would like to. If there was a particular area where you had difficulty, check out the local library or online resources for information on that topic.

## Answer Sheet

1. B
2. A
3. C
4. B
5. A
6. D
7. A
8. B
9. A
10. A
11. B
12. C
13. B
14. B
15. D
16. C
17. B
18. D
19. C
20. B