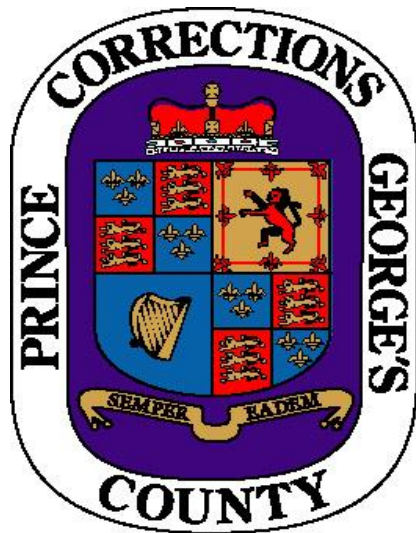


# *Prince George's County Department of Corrections*

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## **Corporal Written Knowledge Examination *Orientation Material***



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*Developed by:*  
THE PITTMAN MCLENAGAN GROUP, L.C.

Bethesda, Maryland

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## Overview

This packet of information is designed to provide information useful in studying for and taking the written knowledge examination. The more familiar you are with test taking strategies, the more you will be able to focus on applying your knowledge rather than struggling with the testing environment. In the information provided we will discuss:

- The areas to be covered in this exam,
- Studying for the exam,
- Preparing for the exam,
- Filling out the answer sheet,
- Tips for reading each question,
- Tips for determining the best answer,
- Test administration and scoring, and,
- Details of the test administration.

There are many methods used by individuals when taking multiple-choice exams. ***The information provided here describes just one approach.*** It is not intended to suggest that other methods do not work equally as well. You may already have certain skills that have served you well in taking multiple-choice exams. You should decide, based on your own skill and experience, what information in this orientation packet is useful to you. However, please remember that each promotional exam developed by THE PITTMAN MCLENAGAN GROUP, L.C. (PMG) contains only newly developed test questions. While the content on the prior tests may be similar, test questions are not re-used. Therefore, it is recommended that you study the content of the identified source material instead of studying old test material or study guides.

## Test Content

Based on prior studies of the rank, specific areas have been identified as relevant for testing purposes.

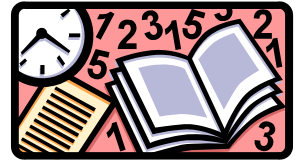
***These areas are not listed in order of importance.*** Certain areas will have more questions on the test than others based on the results of the study. All areas have been linked to specific source(s) identified for this test. This information allows test question writers to focus the question on job-related material for the specific rank. See Appendix A for a listing of the test areas.

## Studying for the Test

To focus your efforts, you should look at the listed test content areas and then try to find information related to that content area within the source material. Think about how this content area is relevant to the rank. Try to find relevant examples of that content area in the source. Try to think about how that information may be used by a Corporal.

Think about these tips in your study efforts:

- Create sample questions based on the source material and the content areas. Learn and/or memorize other areas that appear relevant for the test.
- Use flash cards to help you memorize key information. Create these by using 3x5 index cards with key issues on the front and answers on the back.
- Think of other ways to memorize information through the use of mnemonics such as memory formulas and phrases.
- Write notes on the important information you discover during your studies. Some people remember better the things they have written.
- Some candidates in similar processes have said that forming a study group with others proved helpful. One approach would be to have each member provide outlines or key concepts/issues from certain parts of the source material. How these relate to Corporal could be discussed.



## Reading List

The reading list for Corporal is provided in the published Announcement.

## Filling out the Answer Sheet

Doing well on the test is about more than just knowing the answer to the question. Your test is scored by computer. Your answers are recorded on an answer sheet that is scanned through the computer. If you do not fill out the answer sheet correctly, your answers may be scored incorrectly.

To help avoid this problem remember the following:

- Make sure that the question number in the test booklet matches the question number you are answering on the answer sheet.
- Make sure that the letter (a, b, c, d) that you choose from the question booklet matches the letter you darken on the answer sheet.
- There are five options on the answer sheet, but each test only uses four options. Any response marked in the “e” space will be counted as incorrect.
- Review the answer sheet before beginning the test to avoid confusion and loss of time in correcting errors. Notice that on the answer sheet the numbers are in groups or rows of 50 answers. For example, questions 1- 50 are in the first row and questions 51-100 are in the second row. For numbers 1 through 50,

the first column of numbers is 1 through 10. There is room for 200 questions on this answer sheet. Since your test will have 50 questions, you will only be using the first group, or row, of responses.

- During the test, if you change an answer, erase your mark completely. Stray marks may be misinterpreted as your intended answer by the computer scanner.
- Do not fill in more than one answer for any question. **Multiple answers for a question will be scored as incorrect!**
- It is your responsibility to mark the answer sheet correctly!

See Appendix B for a copy of the answer sheet.

## Looking at the Test Questions

- Each question will be a complete sentence.
- There will be no answers like the following:
  - “all of the above”
  - “none of the above”
  - “both a. and c.”
  - “I, II, and III”
- All questions related to a particular source document will be preceded by a paragraph similar to the following:

**The following questions were taken from the Prince George's County Department of Corrections Policy and Procedure Manual. Answer each question in this section by choosing the best answer based on the information contained in this source. Disregard conflicting information from other sources and/or contrary practices that you may have observed through your personal experiences.**

## Question Format

Below and on the next page are two examples of test questions that are similar to the question format that you will see on the actual test. These examples are not based on any source material for this particular test. Familiarize yourself with this format.

## Question Examples

1. Under normal situations, communications should be transmitted primarily using what medium?
  - a. Telephone or intercom system.
  - b. Personal cellular phones.
  - c. Memorandums.
  - d. E-mails.

***The ABCs of Correctional Work, page 45***

2. There is a fire within one area of the Correctional Center. Where will the affected inmates be evacuated?
- To the Reception Area.
  - To the Lobby.
  - To the adjacent housing unit or the Gymnasium.
  - To the basement or Main Sally Port.

***The ABCs of Correctional Work, page 60***

## Reading the Test Questions and Picking Answers

Think about the following when reading the questions:

- Read the entire test question and each possible answer before making your choice. A common mistake is to choose the first answer that you come to that “sounds good.” Don’t fall into this trap! Read each possible answer carefully before choosing the one you think is best.
- If you find yourself getting bogged down in a question, go ahead and answer the question but note this so you can return to it later. You could put a light pencil mark next to the number on the answer sheet so you can easily find those questions you want to revisit.
- Do not “read into” the question or possible answers. Look at the question as it is stated.
- Be sure to have a watch or some other timer. Make sure, however, your watch or timer is not an alarm or cell phone. Keep track of your own time. If you have skipped any questions, be sure to leave time at the end to go back and answer them. If you have time at the end of the test, check your answers and make sure you responded to all questions.



Keep these ideas in mind when picking an answer:

- Try to decide if any of the options are clearly wrong to you. Once you have eliminated one option, your chance of choosing the correct answer increases.
- Do not believe the *myth* that suggests that “c” is the most common correct answer. The correct answer is distributed across a, b, c, and d. If you pick all of one answer (a, b, c, or d), your result will be a low score on the test.
- There is no penalty for guessing. **DO NOT LEAVE ANY QUESTION UNANSWERED.** Knowing the answer is best, of course, but guessing or even filling in an answer without reading the question is better than leaving a question blank.

## Preparing for the Test

The following tips will help you prepare for the test:

- Be sure to eat before the test. Some foods, such as fresh fruits and vegetables, can help to reduce stress. Foods that can increase stress should be avoided (e.g., artificial sweeteners, chocolate, fried foods, junk food).
- Bring everything you will need for the test (e.g., non-digital watch, confirmation letter, photo identification). Pencils will be provided.
- Allow yourself plenty of time to arrive before the test. You must be at the test site by the identified arrival time.
- Prepare for the test mentally. Visualize yourself being calm and collected during the test.
- Have confidence that you will do well. Stay calm and avoid putting too much pressure on yourself. Some anxiety is normal, but if you feel overwhelmed and anxious, your test performance may suffer. Instead, focus on doing the best you can.
- If necessary, use relaxation techniques to calm yourself. For example, take several slow, deep breaths to relax or stretch.
- Don't panic when other test takers begin handing in their tests. There's no prize for finishing first.

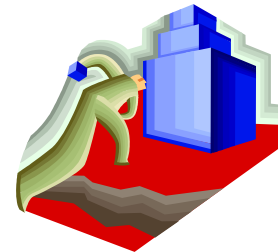


## Test Administration and Scoring

- Filling in identifying information on the answer sheet and other general instructions for the exam will be completed first. You are responsible for recording your information correctly. The most common mistakes are incorrectly darkening in the circles below the name and identification number and leaving answers blank.
- The test time is two hours.
- You will be given at least one time warning prior to the end of the exam.
- The passing score for the written test is 70%.
- The tests will be scored on site. If you choose to wait, you will receive an unofficial test score. The score is unofficial pending the appeals process.
- Information on the appeals process, including time frames and instructions, will be provided the day of the test.
- The Office of Human Resources Management will generate the official notice of scores to the candidates.
- PMG will retain the original answer sheets. The Office of Human Resources Management will retain a copy of the answer sheets.
- See Appendix C for a copy of the test instructions.

## Test Administration Details

- The details regarding test administration and timing are provided in the published announcement.
- There will be one test administration.
- The time allowed for answering test questions is two hours.
- You must have your confirmation letter and photo identification for registration.
- You must know your badge number for use in registration.
- **Attire: You must be in your duty (everyday) uniform in order to sit for the exam.**
- You will not be permitted to bring food or drink into the exam room.
- You will only be permitted to wear a non-digital (analog) wristwatch with no audible alarm. You will not be permitted into the exam room with digital watches, stop watches, clocks, and all digital devices.
- You may not bring personal digital assistants, cell phones, two-way radios, pagers, cameras, imaging devices, or any other electronic device to the examination site.
- You may not bring any source materials or texts, notebooks, paper, folders, or notes or reference material of any description into the exam site.
- Backpacks, brief cases, carry bags, and luggage of any description are prohibited at the examination site. **WALLETS AND PURSES ARE PERMITTED.**
- Should there be some emergency reason that your cell phone must be monitored during testing, clear this need in advance with Yolonda Smedley, Assistant Chief, Human Resources Division. Yolonda Smedley can be reached at (301) 952-7018 or mobile 240-419-8803. In Ms. Smedley's absence, please contact Renee Morrison at (301) 952-7171.
- If you need to use the bathroom during the test administration you will be escorted. You will not be allowed any extra time to complete your test.
- Expect to spend *at least* ½ day in the entire testing process including registration, instructions and test time.



**GOOD LUCK!**

## Appendix A - Areas to be Covered on the Corporal Written Exam

- ✓ Knowledge of location and proper use of emergency equipment, evacuation plans, disaster response plans, alternate housing of inmates and National Incident Command Protocol (NIMS).
- ✓ Knowledge of security and safety devices and procedures, weapons, head count techniques, evidence collection procedures, key control procedures, searches and seizures, supervision of inmates, housing unit management, perimeter security, and/or transportation procedures.
- ✓ Knowledge of inmate rights, discipline hearing procedures and infractions, sanitation and hygiene, food service, medical and healthcare services, grievance procedures, communication policies, visitation policies, work programs, services and programs, inmate funds/valuables and/or commissary.
- ✓ Knowledge of forms, logs and reports used to document activities, the Correctional Information Management System (CIMS) and inmate records.
- ✓ Knowledge of employee performance appraisals, departmental discipline program, dress code, various types of leave, misconduct (e.g., harassment, discrimination, staff/inmate sexual misconduct), and minimum staffing levels.



## **Appendix C- Example of Test Instructions**

This is the written knowledge exam. You have two hours to complete this exam. This two hour time period is provided to give you ample time to read and respond carefully to each question.

The test questions are designed to assess your knowledge in various areas that have been identified as important to the position. Each test question has been reviewed internally by subject matter experts comprised of Department of Corrections employees knowledgeable in the job.

This test is presented in a multiple-choice format with each question having four possible responses from which to choose.

There is no penalty for guessing; therefore you should attempt to answer all questions.

Check to make sure you are marking the proper number on your answer sheet that corresponds to the question you are answering on the test.

If you change an answer be sure to erase your mark completely.

Provide only one answer for each question. Two answers for a question will be scored as an incorrect response.

The questions have been developed from the sources identified for this test. Therefore, you should answer each question based upon information provided in the source material.

When you are finished, bring your test booklet and answer sheet to the front, leave your pencils on the table.

Any attempts to cheat during the exam will be considered a major infraction.

If you fail to correctly enter your candidate identification number, it may cause a delay in receiving your unofficial score today.

**DO NOT TURN THE PAGE UNTIL YOU ARE TOLD TO DO SO.**

***GOOD LUCK!***