

8308/8508 Sheriff's Sergeant Examination Preparation Guide



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Introduction

Thank you for participating in the promotional process for Sergeant. You have already performed responsible work in your current position with the department. Should you become a Sergeant, your performance will impact more people both inside and outside the department. You will manage personnel activities, assuming all supervisory responsibility for those under your command and serve as a role model for all personnel in the department.

What is the Purpose of the Preparation Guide?

The purpose of this guide is to help you prepare for the examination and acquire an understanding of the promotional testing process in the City and County of San Francisco.

The goal of a promotional testing process is to measure your job-related knowledge and abilities in a controlled (i.e., standardized) environment. Since the test is based on the job, it is usually in your best interest to learn as much as possible about job duties and the knowledge and abilities that are required to perform those duties.

Test Security & Confidentiality

In the development of promotional examinations, the Department of Human Resources Public Safety Team takes many steps to ensure test security and confidentiality. These steps may include test development at an off-site location, secure filing systems, signed confidentiality agreements, multiple versions of test forms when appropriate, “blind” scoring of test papers, and other techniques.

The loss or disclosure of examination information or material, unintentional or otherwise, is a very serious matter as it can threaten the validity of the process. Since examinations represent a significant investment in time and money to develop and administer, a security violation can be very costly and disruptive to the operations of the Department of Human Resources (DHR) and the department. Intentional disclosure of test material is also illegal.

Charter Sec. 10.101 notes that: *The [Civil Service] Commission shall have power to institute and prosecute legal proceedings for violations of any civil service merit system or Department of Human Resources provisions of this Charter. [...] In any hearing conducted by the Commission or by any hearing officer it appoints pursuant to this section, the Commission or the hearing officer shall have the power to subpoena and require the attendance of witnesses and the production of records.*

You can help contribute to a professional testing program by avoiding situations that might be misinterpreted by other candidates. For example, you may be discussing what you think will be on the test with a coworker. A third person walks by and overhears only part of the conversation, and concludes that you have “insider” information and a rumor is born.

You have been informed regarding the identity of the subject matter experts that will be assisting with

test development. You must avoid the temptation to ask *anything* related to the process, even general questions of these individuals. Our experts signed a detailed confidentiality agreement and it is inappropriate to ask them to potentially violate the law.

DHR is committed to providing as much information as we can. When we do not share information, it is because (a) we're protecting test security or the confidentiality of results, (b) we're still working on the test or scoring, or (c) we simply do not know the answer. Also, due to the sensitivity of the information we are reluctant to speculate, offer an opinion, or answer hypothetical questions. We want to be helpful, but we need to be careful.

We sometimes get calls from candidates with questions we will not answer. Providing information to one candidate and not others simply wouldn't be fair. Our goal is to share the same information with everyone at the same time. We also attempt to disseminate information through parallel channels, such as mailed correspondence, email, department bulletins, postings on the intranet, or group announcements. *The best source of accurate information is official correspondence and documents provided by DHR or those issued jointly by the San Francisco Sheriff's Office (SFSO) and DHR.*

Sample Confidentiality Agreement

To participate, you will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement prior to the examination. A sample agreement is shown below.



Sheriff's Sergeant Examination CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

As a candidate in the Sheriff's Sergeant promotional examination process, I understand that Civil Service Commission Rules prohibit candidates from sharing, copying, loaning, assigning, removing, releasing or publishing any of the documents, data or information relative to this examination process to any person, agency or jurisdiction without the expressed written consent of the Assistant Deputy Director, Department of Human Resources.

I also understand that Civil Service Commission Rules prohibit candidates from engaging in any conversation in which the topics, content and/or format of the examination are discussed until after the conclusion of the performance exercise administration on October 19, 2026. I understand that breach of these instructions may be viewed as a violation under Civil Service Commission Rule 111 as follows:

Sec. 111.9 Cheating or Fraud in Examinations *It is the policy of the Civil Service Commission that examinations shall be conducted in a fair and impartial manner in order to test fairly the relative qualifications, merit, and fitness of applicants. Any person cheating, attempting to cheat, or assisting other persons in cheating in any phase of the examination process shall be prosecuted to the full extent of the Charter and other laws. Actions to be taken include elimination from the examination process, dismissal, and ineligibility for future employment. Cheating shall include the use or attempted use of materials not authorized by the scheduling notice to candidates to report for the examination. Significant false statements by applicants on the application or during the selection process shall be good cause for the exclusion of such person from the examination and such other appropriate action as may be recommended by the Human Resources Director.*

Sec. 111.9.1 Aid, Hindrance, Fraud and Collusion in Examinations *No person or officer shall, by himself/herself or in cooperation with other persons, defeat, deceive or obstruct any person in respect to his or her right of examination; or falsely mark, grade, estimate or report upon the examination or proper standing of any person examined hereunder, or aid in so doing; or make any false representations concerning the same, or concerning the person examined; or furnish to any person any special or secret information for the purpose of either improving or injuring the prospects or chances of any person of being appointed, employed or promoted. [. . .] Any eligible securing standing on a list by fraud, concealment of fact or violation of Commission Rules shall be removed from such list and if certified or assigned to a position shall be removed therefrom.*

Further, the Charter of the City and County of San Francisco, Section 10.101 General Powers and Duties, states:

The Commission shall have power to institute and prosecute legal proceedings for violations of any civil service merit system or Department of Human Resources provisions of this Charter.

I have read and understood the terms of this Confidentiality Agreement and I understand the consequences for failure to comply with them, and I attest to the following:

- I have no knowledge of the specific content of this examination and agree not to provide any exam content information to anyone for the duration of this agreement.
- I understand that all my responses must be clear in order to receive credit for my answers.
- I understand that, if I wish to challenge the way this test is administered, I am to file a protest in writing prior to leaving the test center after each test administration.

Signature

Date

Print Last Name, First Name

Star #

Examination Components

The selection process for 8308/8508 Sheriff's Sergeant will consist of two components. The first component is the Written Supervisory Examination that is scheduled to be administered on October 17, 2026. The second component is the Performance Exercise, which is scheduled to be administered on October 19, 2026.

The components and tentative examination weights are:

- 1) Written Supervisory Examination (Weight: 21%)
- 2) Performance Exercise (Weight: 79%)

Written Supervisory Examination

What is the Written Supervisory Examination?

The Written Supervisory Examination consists of a video-based observation component and situational judgment questions.

All directions are clearly stated in the test itself.

Part I Officer Observation and Evaluation

Part II Supervisory Judgement Multiple Choice

Corrective or Progressive Discipline as Used in This Exam

A key part of a supervisory job is the training, coaching and counseling of staff. In most cases, performance issues and problems can be corrected by giving verbal coaching or simply talking with the employee, determining the cause of the problem and providing appropriate feedback and training. Sometimes problems can be more severe or of a continuing nature. In other words, there may be negative consequences for the employee for failure to comply. In this case, you need to follow organizational policy and follow a progression of steps to initiate corrective action or discipline. For purposes of this exam, the following simplified steps are defined. Whenever a question involves one or more of these steps, refer to the following definition of each step. In the test, these steps will be bolded and in quotes so you will know that the test refers specifically to the action defined below. Note that these definitions in this preparation guide may not correspond exactly to the process you are familiar with in your current department.

Steps	Definition
(1) Oral Reprimand	An oral reprimand is a formal conversation between a supervisor and an employee about a specific aspect of the employee's performance and/or conduct. The employee is put on notice that this is the first step in corrective discipline, but no record will be made in the individual's personnel file.
(2) Written Reprimand	A written reprimand is a formal written notice to the employee regarding repeated offenses or significant misconduct. The employee is given written notice of disciplinary action that will occur. Supervisors will usually involve management of Human Resources and provide documentation of the employee's action leading up to the reprimand. The reprimand is recorded in the personnel file and is signed by the employee.
(3) Unsatisfactory Service Rating or Other Consequences	Depending upon the nature of the problem, various types of actions can result, ranging from a notice of unsatisfactory service to suspension or termination.

(Do not bring this preparation guide to the test. All instructions, including the table above, are contained in the test booklet.)

Marking Your Answers

The answer sheet is machine scored so mark only one answer for each question and fill in the circle completely. If you mark more than one answer, you will get the question wrong. Erase all changes completely. Mark only on the Scantron sheet provided. If you don't know the answer to a question, the best strategy is to mark an answer anyway because you may get it right and you will definitely get it wrong if you don't answer. Some choices may receive partial credit.

What Knowledge Areas and Abilities Does the Supervisory Examination Measure?

The Written Supervisory Examination is designed to measure a candidate's ability to effectively manage and supervise within a custodial setting. The exercise measures the following knowledge areas and abilities:

- Communication skills
- Interpersonal relations
- Working with management
- Management of currently incarcerated persons
- Prioritization and resources management
- Staff and interpersonal relations

- Integrity and reliability
- Training and career development
- Managing performance
- Managing change
- Team development and delegation
- Discipline and managing difficult employees
- Managing conflict
- Changing role to supervisor

Performance Exercise (PE)

What is the Performance Exercise?

The PE is a job simulation designed to measure your ability to apply the knowledge and abilities that a Sheriff's Sergeant needs to competently perform duties of the job. You will be playing the role of Sheriff's Sergeant Chris Candidate.

In this exercise, you will play the role of a newly promoted SFSO Sergeant who will be conducting a muster with your unit, and then engage in meetings with one or more of your Deputies. Thus, this exercise has three parts:

- Preparation time (20 minutes)
- Oral Presentation - Muster (5 minutes)
- Role Play – Meeting with Deputy (4 minutes)

Preparation Time (20 minutes)

In addition to these Candidate Instructions, you have the following documents during your preparation time:

- Muster Contents and Background Information
- Excerpted Department Policies, Correspondences, Memos and Documents
- An email from a Deputy
- A packet of note paper

You may write on any and all of the documents listed above, and you will bring these documents with you to your test room.

Oral Presentation - Muster with your Unit

The Oral Presentation/Muster is intended to simulate your first introductory meeting with members of your unit. The presentation must include the following:

- Make an introductory presentation explaining your management and leadership style as well as explaining your expectations.
- You will also address the current issue within the SFSO provided in your packet, as well as run a muster.

For this oral presentation, provide your verbal responses to the camera.

Role Play - Meeting with Staff

For this role play, you will watch a video, simulating a meeting with one staff member intended to simulate a feedback session with one of your subordinates after your muster.

Dimensions measured in the Performance Exercise may include:

- Management and Supervision
- Analysis and Planning
- Communication Skills
- Professional Knowledge
- Leadership

What Knowledge Areas and Abilities Does the PE Measure?

The PE is designed to measure job knowledge areas and abilities that were identified during the job analysis as critical and essential for a Sheriff's Sergeant. The job knowledge areas and abilities tested will be sampled from the following:

- Knowledge of federal/state/local laws and regulations and departmental policies and procedures governing discrimination and harassment.
- Knowledge of federal/state/departmental laws and regulations governing law enforcement and detention facilities, e.g., Constitutional laws, CA Penal Code, Family Code, Welfare and Institutions Code, Minimum Standards for Local Detention Facilities, Code of Civil Procedure, etc.
- Knowledge of departmental work rules, Collective Bargaining Agreements, regulations, policies and procedures.
- Knowledge of the principles of effective supervision.
- Knowledge of how to schedule staff activities, e.g., vacation, leave, RDO, OT, coverage, backfill, etc.
- Knowledge of department policy and procedures manual.
- Knowledge of discipline and grievance procedures for personnel and currently incarcerated.
- Knowledge of proper search criteria and methods e.g., in the field, in the jail facility.

- Knowledge of each Division's safety and security requirements and proper notification procedures during critical incidents.
- Knowledge of defensive tactics, approved restraining methods, and use of force techniques.
- Knowledge of law enforcement equipment care and use (firearms, radio, etc.).
- Knowledge of court decisions governing jail administration, currently incarcerated rights and currently incarcerated releases.
- Knowledge of interviewing techniques.
- Knowledge of the practice of care, welfare and treatment of currently incarcerated.
- Knowledge of jail and court system.
- Knowledge of California laws as applied to local adult detention facilities.
- Knowledge of employee training principles.
- Knowledge of Title 15 of the California Code of Regulations.
- Knowledge of the criminal justice system.
- Knowledge of departmental organization and function (chain-of-command).
- Knowledge of health and safety regulations.
- Knowledge of employee relations/labor relations issues.
- Knowledge of radio codes and procedures, including 10 Code system.
- Knowledge of employee assistance programs/peer support.
- Knowledge of viable internal and external transport routes, protocol and procedures for daily use and use in the event of emergency evacuations, special circumstances, etc.
- Knowledge of civil and criminal court rules and procedures.
- Knowledge of currently incarcerated direct supervision techniques.
- Knowledge of effective interpersonal communication techniques.
- Knowledge of effective listening techniques, e.g., eye contact, active listening, etc.
- Knowledge of potential cultural, social, religious differences, etc.
- Ability to organize, prioritize and address several competing and or simultaneous tasks and demands.
- Ability and willingness to confront adversity.
- Ability to seek out and determine pertinent information, make decisions based on the data at hand, and solve problems with practical and timely solutions.
- Ability to recognize and utilize subordinate staff's strengths and skills.
- Ability to be proactive and to take initiative.
- Ability to effectively delegate tasks and duties as necessary.
- Ability to accurately recall names and numbers.
- Ability to follow verbal directions.
- Ability to follow written directions.
- Ability to provide clear verbal instructions so that others will understand.
- Ability to keep accurate records.
- Ability to write comprehensive, effective, and concise emails, memos, letters, reports, procedural orders, instructions, etc.
- Ability to communicate effectively in writing using proper spelling, grammar, syntax, punctuation, and vocabulary.

- Ability to be fair and objective in a consistent manner.
- Ability to hold subordinate staff accountable for the performance of their jobs.
- Ability to control, direct, and instruct staff, civilians and/or currently incarcerated.
- Ability to ensure successful completion of assignments and activities.
- Ability to enforce departmental rules and regulations with firmness and tact.
- Ability to recognize which labor and personnel issues can be addressed at your level and which should be referred to superiors.
- Ability to assess strengths and weaknesses of sworn staff and cadets
- Ability to recognize subtle, but significant, changes in behavior of others.
- Ability to work under the direct supervision of a superior officer.
- Ability to recognize when the use of force is necessary and appropriate.
- Ability to follow through on projects and assignments.
- Ability to recognize confidential issues and how to handle in an appropriate manner.
- Ability to maintain confidentiality of sensitive information (e.g., investigations, medical, Command Staff directives, etc.).
- Ability to resolve conflict/ problems among staff members, currently incarcerated, or members of the public.
- Ability to demonstrate flexibility and adapt to changing situations.
- Ability and willingness to represent management positions and policies to subordinates.
- Ability to acknowledge subordinate staff's exceptional performance.
- Ability and willingness to take the role needed to accomplish tasks and activities.
- Ability to create a good first impression; command attention and respect; and instill self confidence in others.
- Ability to gain the respect of others.
- Ability to act as a role model/mentor to others.
- Ability to model ethical work behavior by supervising in a fair, honest and consistent manner
- Ability to motivate and direct staff.
- Ability to create a team atmosphere in order to have staff work effectively together.
- Ability to promote socially acceptable attitudes and behavior of currently incarcerated and staff.
- Ability to establish and maintain good interpersonal/cooperative relations with others in the work environment.
- Ability to think and act quickly, calmly, effectively in stressful/emergency situations.
- Ability to tolerate the negative aspects of the job.
- Ability to perform effectively while under stress.
- Ability to display a genuine respect for others.
- Ability to deal courteously and responsively with Sheriff's Office personnel and others.

PE Administration

Sample Instructions [The instructions will be finalized before administration of the test.]

San Francisco Sheriff's Office 8308/8508 Sergeant Performance Exercise *Candidate Instructions*

Exercise Overview

In this exercise, you will play the role of a newly promoted SFSO Sergeant who will be conducting a muster with your unit, and then engage in meetings with one or more of your Deputies. Thus, this exercise has three parts:

- Preparation time (20 minutes)
- Oral Presentation - Muster (5 minutes)
- Role Play – Meeting with Deputy (4 minutes)

Preparation Time (20 minutes)

In addition to these Candidate Instructions, you have the following documents during your preparation time:

- Muster Contents and Background Information
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- An email from a Deputy
- A packet of note paper

You may write on any and all of the documents listed above, and you will bring these documents with you to your test room.

Oral Presentation - Muster with your Unit

The Oral Presentation/Muster is intended to simulate your first introductory meeting with members of your unit. The presentation must include the following:

- Make an introductory presentation explaining your management and leadership style as well as explaining your expectations.
- You will also address the current issue within the SFSO provided in your packet, as well as run a muster.

For this oral presentation, provide your verbal responses to the camera.

Role Play - Meeting with Staff

For this role play, you will have a meeting with one staff member [video] intended to simulate a feedback session with one of your subordinates after your muster.

Preparation Time

You have been given specific instructions for the Performance Exercise. You are expected to read all materials and prepare, as you feel is necessary for the Oral Presentation and Role Play. You will have 20 minutes to prepare. As you will have no time between each exercise, it is imperative that you review the instructions and prepare for both during the initial preparation. Along with the exercise instructions, you have been provided with notepaper, a pen, a pencil, and a highlighter. Feel free to take notes during this time. You WILL be able to use these notes (and the instructions, if necessary) during the administration of these exercises. Once you are given the signal to begin, you should immediately review the material and begin your preparation.

Oral Presentation - Muster with your Unit (5 Minutes)

An Introduction to Your Leadership Style and Your Expectations

This is your first meeting with your members of your unit as their Sergeant. You should use this opportunity to set the stage for the future in working with this particular group. Refer to the sheet titled "Muster Content/Background Information" for further information regarding this part of the meeting.

You should address the following in your introduction:

- Your management and leadership style/approach and how this will benefit the department.
- Your role in the day-to-day functioning of the department.
- What members can expect from you as their Sergeant.
- Your expectations for your unit.
- How you will handle certain key issues as a Sergeant (e.g., dictate, ask all to be involved in decisions, etc.).

Essentially, you will need to let your members know what they should expect from you and what you will expect from them. You will have to address any issues and the points above to the best of your ability. How you choose to discuss each portion and the amount of time you decide to devote to each portion is your responsibility.

Discussion of Current Issue

As part of your muster, your Captain would also like you to discuss a "current issue" of concern in regard to the SFSO. Refer to the sheet titled "Muster Content/Background Information" for further information regarding this part of the meeting.

Structure of the Muster with your Unit

A countdown timer will be displayed on the computer screen, counting down from **five minutes (5:00)**. If you finish your presentation before the five minutes expire, you may review your notes for the next portion.

When in the test room, you will be “in-role” and you should remain in-role for the entire muster. The extent and manner to which you cover all of the parts in this exercise is your responsibility. It is recommended that you be as detailed as possible in your responses; the assessors can only grade you on what you say.

Please allow yourself enough time to address both your **Introduction, Management and Leadership Style** and **Discussion of Current Issue**.

Role Play - Meeting with Staff (4 Minutes)

The meeting with Staff is intended to simulate a feedback session with subordinates after your muster. For this exercise, Deputy Beam [video] has a complaint about Deputy Ketel. Refer to the sheet titled “Muster Content/Background Information” for further information regarding this part of the meeting.

Your task is to address the deputy’s complaint to the extent possible through the meeting and address any other issues that arise. As the new supervisor, you may also wish to provide other comments or guidance to the Deputy to develop your supervisory relationship.

Remember:

Any notes that you make will not be read or evaluated and are for your use only. Only the video recordings of the Oral Performance and Role Play will be assessed by the raters.

How is Performance on the PE Evaluated?

A rating committee comprised of subject matter experts from outside the SFSO will receive specific rating guidance and training. Your responses will be rated independently by a team of raters. All ratings will be anonymous. After completing independent ratings, the raters will confer to produce final ratings of your PE.

PREPARATION INFORMATION FOR SUPERVISORY EXAM

How Should I Prepare for the SE?

In our experience, one of the most helpful preparation methods for this type of assessment is to practice! How might one do this?

Informal Study Group Method

Some individuals may wish to form a study group to prepare for this assessment. This study group would spend some time individually brainstorming potential assessment content, scenarios and questions. This could entail the creation of an extensive list of situations/incidents (tactical incidents, management challenges, supervisory problems, leadership challenges, etc.) that a SFSO Sergeant might face. The group could then review the individual brainstorming lists and combine this information into a master list.

The group might assign these scenarios to group members and each individual could outline several basic testing scenarios. The individuals could also outline general questions related to the scenarios and potentially research (and document) the appropriate responses. The group could submit their scenarios and questions to an administrative lead whose job would be to compile the scenarios into a study guide.

The group could meet to discuss the scenarios. This part of the process is critical. Individuals should share, discuss and debate their responses. This is a process where real “learning” often occurs, as group members can gain the perspective of others in the group, especially in terms of how they would address a given scenario! For this reason, taking notes during these discussions is recommended.

Individual Study Method

Many of the recommendations included in the study group method also apply to individual preparation. One could brainstorm scenarios, outline responses related to the scenarios, and research the appropriate responses to these scenarios. This information then could be compiled into a study guide and used to prepare for this assessment.

If you choose to prepare on your own, you might try to network with others conducting a similar method of preparation. You can share your study guide with others in advance of the assessment administration and review the study guides created by other individuals.

While some individuals who engage in individual preparation may feel that they are potentially benefitting their “test competitors” by sharing a well-prepared study guide, it is nevertheless important to note that reviewing study guides and scenarios prepared by others provides one with an opportunity to explore perspectives that one otherwise might not consider when addressing an

incident. In other words, it allows one to obtain the “best” information from others’ study guides for incorporation into one’s own guide. Individuals who prepare this way can spend the last few weeks before the assessment to continually review their revised study guide.

Note that these methods require no cost and simply rely on ingenuity, effort and the cooperation of others. We have found that these methods are reported in post-assessment candidate surveys as being the methods most closely associated with a high degree of success in the promotional process!

General Strategies

- ☐ Expectations of a SFSO Sergeant. Familiarize yourself with the roles and responsibilities of a SFSO Sergeant. The examination will ask you questions regarding how you will handle supervision and other issues as a supervisor. Therefore, it is important to understand what duties you will be responsible for in this role.
- ☐ Reading list. Review your departmental manuals. This will help you to further understand the proper way to respond to various situations that may be integrated into the assessment.
- ☐ Research “Hot Topics.” You can prepare yourself for the types of scenarios you may encounter in the assessment process by researching important "hot topics" within the SFSO. Researching topics that could be the basis for hypothetical problems or meetings will help you give/select well-informed and structured responses.
- ☐ Brainstorm. Ask yourself questions such as: How will I handle problematic situations as a supervisor? How will I manage and lead my subordinates? How will I communicate information to others? What do I know about important issues related to the City?
- ☐ Practice. Practice by working with study partners to create questions with multiple parts, a few response options, and then answering the questions.

Diligent preparation for this assessment will help you succeed; however, there are other considerations that can affect your performance on the day of the assessment, including:

- ☐ Your Physical Well-being. If you can, get a good night’s rest before the assessment and eat right. Try to ensure that you are in the best possible condition, both physically and mentally on the day of the assessment. Candidates in public safety promotional processes across the U.S. often work the day before or even the day of testing. Plan ahead and think how you can put yourself in the best possible situation for the assessment.
- ☐ Arrive Early. Make all necessary arrangements to ensure that you arrive early at the assessment site. It would be wise to anticipate traffic delays in traveling to the site and to allocate extra

travel time to ensure an early arrival even with delays, especially due to the limited parking in the neighborhood of the Test Center.

- Controlling Anxiety and Stress. Many candidates experience anxiety as a result of the stress and pressure to perform well on the assessment. This is a common and natural response. Understanding this anxiety is important. This anxiety is sometimes displayed in individuals as tension or even anger (e.g., on edge, quick to be set off, etc.). Again, acknowledging these feelings may help you to relax and put yourself in a better mindset for taking the assessment. As much as possible, you need to have a positive attitude on the day of the assessment.

General Test Taking Strategies

There are several strategies and tips to keep in mind when taking the examination that will ensure your test score is accurate and reflects your level of knowledge about the job.

1. **Listen carefully.** The exam administrator will provide you with complete instructions for taking the exam. Be sure that you pay close attention to all test instructions. It is extremely important that you completely understand the directions before the exam begins.
2. **Ask questions.** If there are instructions that you do not understand or if something is not clear, please feel free to ask the exam administrator any questions that you may have before the exam begins.
3. **Note start and end times.** Just before the test administrator begins the test, make a note of the time the test will actually begin and the time that the test will end.
4. **Keep track of time.** It is important that you keep track of your time so that you are able to pace yourself throughout the exam. You do not want to run out of time and have unanswered questions. It is important that you allot a few minutes of time to guess on unanswered questions at the end of the exam. The test administrator will make several announcements regarding remaining test time, but otherwise you are on your own.
5. **Remain calm.** It is important that you remain calm throughout this exam so that you are able to work most effectively. You can't allow yourself to become nervous or confused by a few difficult or challenging questions. There are going to be times when you are not going to know the answer and neither will other individuals taking the exam.
6. **Read each question carefully.** Be sure that you understand what the question requires of you.
7. **Things to consider when marking the answer sheet:**
 - Make heavy black marks that fill the circles completely.
 - Completely erase any answers you wish to change.
 - Do not make any stray marks on the answer sheet.
 - You must use a #2 pencil. A pencil is required to complete the answer sheet because a computer will be reading these marks.

- Place all of your answers on the answer sheet. Only answers on the answer sheet will be scored.
- Be sure that the number of the question you are working on corresponds with the number that you fill in on the answer sheet. For example, if you are working on question 37, make sure that you fill in your answer on line 37 of the answer sheet. Periodically check yourself to make sure that your answers are in the correct spaces.

How Should I Prepare for the PE?

The following include recommendations to prepare for the PE:

1. **Reading Materials.** Copies of relevant references from the Suggested Reading Materials [see below] will be provided to you on the day of the test. Otherwise, you should be familiar with the materials so that you can quickly apply that knowledge to situations as they evolve in the meetings of the PE.
2. **A Word About Video-recorded Exercises.** This test is not intended to measure your potential to be a Hollywood actor. The Public Safety Team and outside evaluators are well aware that candidates are not trained actors. However, in this exercise you will be evaluated on verbal and non-verbal communication skills. It is recommended that you practice talking in front of a video camera.
3. **Practice.** If you are not familiar with this test format, it may be helpful to simulate the test at home. Use the sample instructions and create your own notes on any job-related topics. Then, place a video camera in front of you and act as if you were meeting with individuals. Play the recording for feedback.

Suggested Reading Materials

- A) [Collective Bargaining Agreement between the City & County of San Francisco and the San Francisco Deputy Sheriffs' Association](#) (July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2027)
- B) [Collective Bargaining Agreement between the City & County of San Francisco and the San Francisco Sheriffs' Managers and Supervisors Association](#) (July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2027)
- C) [Collective Bargaining Agreement between the City & County of San Francisco and the Service Employee International Union](#) (July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2027)
- D) [Title 15 of the California Code of Regulations, Adult Detention Facilities - Minimum Standards for Local Detention Facilities](#) (Effective 04/01/25)
- E) Selected materials from the California Penal Code, Code of Civil Procedures, Family Code, Government Code, Labor Code, Welfare and Institution Code

F) Selected materials from the San Francisco Sheriff's Office Division Manuals and Policies & Procedures.

G) Book: Social Intelligence Skills for Sheriff's Department Supervisors/Managers, Stephen J. Sampson, Ph.D. ISBN 0-87425-931-2. Candidates must purchase this book at their own expense.

Applicants are responsible for obtaining reference material A, B, C, D & E (listed above) online, F (listed above) on Lexipol. Specific code sections will be provided to candidates via e-mail at a later date and G must be purchased at own expense. Candidates will not be tested on any changes made to the above-listed sources after July 1, 2026.

What Should I Expect at the Test Site?

The Written Supervisory Examination is scheduled to be administered on Saturday, October 17, 2026, at Skyline College, located at 3300 College Drive, San Bruno, CA 94066.

- For the Written Supervisory Examination, please expect to be at the testing site for approximately three (3) hours.
- There is no dress code for this component. You can come in casual clothing.
- There are parking lots available for candidates.

The Performance Exercise is scheduled to be administered on Monday, October 19, 2026 at Holiday Inn-Golden Gateway, located at 1500 Van Ness Ave, San Francisco, CA 94109.

- For the Performance Exercise, please expect to be at the testing site for approximately three (3) hours. Some candidates will be sequestered.
- Please dress in plain clothes (i.e., civilian) business attire. Do not wear anything indicating rank, organization affiliation or insignias of any kind.
- There is no parking for candidates at the test site. We urge you to consider public transit or have someone drop you at the test site.

You must bring your Driver License or SFSO Photo Identification Card to the test site to be admitted. At check-in, you will submit your signed confidentiality agreement to participate in the test.

Possession of any electronic or battery-operated communication devices is prohibited during the test. Many of these devices can transmit and/or store information. Therefore, to deter cheating and loss of test security, you will be required to relinquish all electronic communication and smart devices—including cell phones, smart watches, Meta smart glasses, other smart glasses, and similar wearable or connected devices—before taking the examination. There will be no exceptions to this rule. Candidates found with electronic communication devices during the test will be disqualified from the selection process.

You may wear a standard, non-smart watch; however, watches with communication, recording, data-storage, or other smart-device capabilities are prohibited. Standard watches with an audible alarm or tone that could distract others are also prohibited.

Please help us streamline the check-in process by leaving these devices at home or in another secure location.

All exam materials (paper, pencils, pens, highlighters) will be provided to you. Do not bring any writing utensils, paper, highlighters, stopwatches or any other devices or study materials to the test site.

No food, chewing gum or drinks (other than bottled water) will be allowed into the test site.

You will be given the opportunity to use the restroom prior to registration. Thereafter, there will be no formal restroom breaks. You may use the restroom during the 20-minute preparation period; however, any restroom break will be taken on your own time, and the preparation period will not be paused or extended.

You may not discuss the examination or any examination content with other candidates at any time. Once you have completed the examination, please leave the building and premises quietly and immediately.

Questions

Applicants with disabilities requiring a reasonable accommodation for this examination process must contact PST as soon as possible, but no later than 5:00 PM on **Friday September 25, 2026** by email to dhrr-publicsafety@sfgov.org.

If you have any questions regarding this Preparation Guide, please send an e-mail to dhrr-publicsafety@sfgov.org by **Friday September 25, 2026**. To ensure fairness, questions cannot be answered individually. Responses to all relevant questions will be made available to all candidates via e-mail prior to the administration of the exercises.

It is each candidate's responsibility to provide a current, valid e-mail address to the PST to which to send all official notifications. If you changed your e-mail address or name after filing your application, you must log in to your SmartRecruiters profile to update your application. If you have problems updating your information online, contact the Public Safety Team at dhrr-publicsafety@sfgov.org.

We wish you the best of luck as you prepare for and participate in this promotional process.