

State of California  
Department of Justice

Office of the Attorney  
General

Study Guide



P.O. BOX 944255  
Sacramento, CA 94244-2550

**SPECIAL AGENT,  
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
EXAMINATION STUDY GUIDE**



**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

INTRODUCTION ..... 3

SAMPLE WRITTEN COMMUNICATION QUESTIONS..... 4

SAMPLE READING COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS..... 5

SAMPLE REASONING QUESTIONS ..... 6

SAMPLE JOB KNOWLEDGE QUESTIONS..... 7



## INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your interest in the Special Agent, Department of Justice classification. In order to gain list eligibility, candidates will need to take the Special Agent examination, which consist of a physical ability test (pass or fail) and written (multiple-choice) examination. The Testing and Selection Unit has designed this study guide in order to help familiarize and prepare candidates with taking the written examination.

The Special Agent written examination contains four content sections: Written Communication, Reading Comprehension, Reasoning, and Job Knowledge. The sample questions provided in this study guide are intended to give candidates an idea of the types of questions they may see on the test.

### **Preparation for the exam**

In order to prepare for the Special Agent examination, candidates should direct any self-studying around the knowledge, skills, and abilities found on the Special Agent bulletin. On the assigned testing date, it is recommended that candidates arrive around 15 minutes before their starting time. All necessary testing material will be provided during the written examination.



## SAMPLE WRITTEN COMMUNICATION QUESTIONS

**Directions:** The purpose of the following question is to revise sentence. The new sentence should have the same meaning and contain the same information as the original sentence. Please choose the correct revision:

### Example –

The board of supervisors called it a night after voting on the final measure.

- A. After voting on the final measure, called it a...
- B. After voting on the final measure, the board of...
- C. After voting on the final measure, it was called...
- D. After voting on the final measure, the night...

Answer: B

**Directions:** The purpose of the following question is to replace the underlined word with another that means the same, or nearly the same, as the original.

### Example –

The chief selected the optimal solution.

- A. Best
- B. Worst
- C. Easiest
- D. Acceptable

Answer: A

**Directions:** The purpose of the following question is to choose the most appropriate word to complete the sentence.

### Example –

Jason was quite \_\_\_\_\_, as he always got his work done on time.

- A. Lazy
- B. Friendly
- C. Motivated
- D. Unfocused

Answer: C



## SAMPLE READING COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

**Directions:** *The purpose of the following questions is to measure your ability to read a passage and then answer a question based on that passage. Make sure to base your answers on the information presented in the passage and not on other information that you may possess regarding the topics addressed.*

To say that municipal, county, state, and tribal law enforcement agencies across the nation have been adversely affected by the economic downturn of the past several years is a dramatic understatement. Local economies have been devastated by both decreasing tax revenues and reduced levels of support from federal and state funding sources. In this fiscal environment, local government executives and legislative bodies have been looking closely at their public safety expenditures and making difficult budget decisions. These decisions not only impact the level and quality of service but also, in some cases, will determine the very existence of a local agency.

### Example –

Based on the paragraph above, which of the following is true?

- A. The economic downturn has affected all levels of government.
- B. Local economies have been affected by increasing tax revenues.
- C. The budgetary decisions of national government executives could decide the fate of an entire local agency.

*Answer: A*

Tailgating another vehicle is unsafe and illegal. Many rear-end collisions are caused by drivers following too close to the vehicle in front of them. The law states that a driver must keep sufficient distance from the vehicle in front in order to stop safely and avoid a collision. Drivers should allow a minimum two seconds' gap between their vehicle and the one ahead. More distance is needed to safely stop in rain or poor visibility.

### Example –

Based on the paragraph above, which statement is most true?

- A. Tailgating another vehicle is unsafe because drivers following too close to the vehicle in front cause all rear end collisions.
- B. Tailgating another vehicle is unsafe because it may not allow sufficient time and space to stop and avoid a collision.
- C. Tailgating another vehicle is unsafe because it rude to the driver in front.
- D. Tailgating another vehicle is unsafe because it is a reckless practice.

*Answer: B*



## SAMPLE REASONING QUESTIONS

**Directions:** The purpose of the following questions is to measure your ability to read a set of facts and make a reasonable conclusion. Choose the best answer for each question.

### **Example –**

You are asked to manage a task force for a special project. The plan lists all tasks that must be completed in 3 months. Although you have a large budget and are extremely experienced in this type of work, the 10 people assigned to the task force do not have much experience. Which of the following actions should you take?

- A. Arrange for training in the skills necessary for them to be successful in this project.
- B. Handle all of the critical tasks myself and minimize the participation of the 10 members.
- C. Meet with the task force and determine the strengths and weaknesses of each member. Assign each member a task. Schedule periodic reviews to determine if the project is on schedule.
- D. Because of the time constraints, immediately break the task force into groups and tell everyone to get to work.

*Answer: C*

### **Example –**

Four friends were sharing a pizza. They decided that the oldest friend would get the extra piece. John is two months older than Bob, who is three months younger than Ted. Andy is one month older than Bob. Who should get the extra piece of pizza?

- A. John
- B. Bob
- C. Ted
- D. Andy

*Answer: C*



**SAMPLE JOB KNOWLEDGE QUESTIONS**

**Directions:** *The purpose of the following questions is to measure your knowledge of various aspects of the law enforcement. Select the correct response to answer each question.*

**Example -**

Which of the following is a felony offense?

- A. Speeding
- B. Robbery
- C. Petty theft
- D. All of the above

*Answer: B*

**Example -**

Who of the following can issue a search warrant in California?

- A. Judges
- B. Attorneys
- C. Police Officers
- D. Special Agents

*Answer: A*