



Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards

Overview

The Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards (MCOLES) is empowered by Public Act 203 of 1965, as amended, to set employment standards for persons entering law enforcement in Michigan. Under that Authority, the MCOLES has developed two examinations to test critical skills required of law enforcement officers.

One of the examinations is a Reading and Writing Test designed to measure writing skills and reading comprehension, required both in basic police training and on the job. The test is job-related and validated for persons entering the law enforcement profession in Michigan.

Who is required to take the test?

All persons entering law enforcement in Michigan must demonstrate proficiency in reading and writing. Under authority of Public Act 203 of 1965, the MCOLES has mandated the testing as part of its Selection and Employment Standards published in the Michigan Administrative Code.

How is the test administered?

The test is now computer-administered. Practice items will be provided to allow you time to acclimate yourself to the computer-based test environment. You will be given two hours to complete the actual test.

How long are the test scores valid, and how are they reported?

Test scores for the Reading and Writing Test do not expire. For those who pass the Reading and Writing Test, a letter grade is reported (i.e., A, B, or C). This letter grade indicates to the employer whether you are in the top (A), middle (B), or lower (C) group among those applicants who have passed the test. 24 hours after taking the test, you may check your results online. Test results will also be mailed to you within two weeks of test administration.

How do I report my passing score to the agency to which I am applying?

You should present your MCOLES Notification of Test Results form (either printed from the web results or the mailed copy) to the agency; they will copy it and return the original to you. If there is any question about your test score(s), the agency will contact the MCOLES directly. Note that your printed or mailed results do not serve as official results; all results will be verified by the agency to which you are applying.

What do I have to bring to the test center on test day?

To be admitted to the test center, you must be at least 18 years of age. For the test, you will need to present a valid driver's license. If your license does not have a picture, you will also need pictured identification.

THE READING AND WRITING TEST

Description

The Reading and Writing Test consists of 120 multiple-choice test items. Half of the items measure writing skills and half measure reading comprehension. The test measures skills required both in training and on the job as determined from an analysis of actual job-related reading and writing materials.

The writing skills portion of the test measures skills in five areas: Detail, Spelling, Word Usage, Clarity, and Grammar. The reading comprehension portion of the test consists of reading a passage and then answering a series of items on the passage.

Review of the Reading and Writing Test

To protect the integrity of the Reading and Writing Test and the substantial investment in the test, the MCOLES does not permit the review of individual test questions. Requests may be made in writing for a verification of the accuracy of the scoring of individual answer sheets.

Practice Test

Below is a "Practice Test" that will give you an understanding of the types of items that are included in the actual test. This Practice Test will help you improve your performance by allowing you to concentrate on responding to each question rather than spending your time attempting to figure out what is being asked of you.

Writing Practice Test

I. Detail: The items in this part of the test deal with detail. There are two statements for each of the following items. You must decide which one statement provides the more useful, detailed information.

1. A. Inspector Lewis entered the premises at 9:42 a.m. to find the remains of the victim, subsequently identified as Allan Jones of 121 Georgetown Road. The victim's spouse, who was found living in the apartment, returned in police custody. She was identified as Patricia Ann Robert. Her address was 807 cottage Way, Flint, Michigan.
- B. Patricia Ann Roberts of 807 Cottage Way, Flint, Michigan was taken into custody by Inspector Lewis for the investigation of the death of her husband, Allan Jones, with whom she was living. Lewis found the remains of Jones, with whom she was living. Lewis found the remains of Jones when he entered Jones' apartment at 9:42 a.m., June 3, 1992, to investigate Jones' disappearance.

2. A. Irving Frederickson of 211 South Washington Street, Seattle, was arrested for the November 3rd murder of Juan Gonzales. Gonzales lived at 1201 Marconi Avenue at the time of the murder.
- B. Irving Frederickson, 18, residing at 211 South Washington Street in Seattle, was arrested in Tacoma, Washington on November 11th. He was arrested for the November 3rd murder of Juan Gonzales of 1201 Marconi Avenue.

II. Spelling: The items in this part of the test deal with spelling. Read each of the following sentences and decide which of the three choices is spelled correctly.

3. On _____, police officers will enlist the aid of an informer.
- A. ocasion
B. occasion
C. occaseon
4. The prosecutor challenged the defendant's _____.
- A. innocence
B. innocense
C. inocence
5. The crowd was _____ to become unruly at the concert.
- A. begining
B. begining
C. begenning

III. Word Usage: You are to review the following sentences and indicate the proper words.

6. The riot control squad _____ the crowd.
- A. dispersed
B. disbursed
7. This was the _____ such attack during the last month
- A. forth
B. fourth
8. The _____ were transported from the hospital by van
- A. patience
B. patients

IV. Clarity: The items in this part of the test deal with clarity. Each item contains three choices. You must decide which of the three choices is most clearly stated. The three choices for each test item refer to the part of each sentence which is *italicized*.

9. The suspect's pants had bloodstains *in the area beneath his right pocket*.

- A. in the area beneath his right pocket.
- B. below the right pocket area.
- C. beneath his right pocket.

10. The prisoner has refused *to say who he is*.

- A. to say who he is.
- B. to identify himself.
- C. to have his name be known.

V. Grammar: The items in this part of the test deal with grammar. Read each of the following sentences and decide if they are grammatically correct or incorrect.

11. If Albertson were to submit to a polygraph test, it would lessen our concerns.

- A. Correct
- B. Incorrect

12. The inspector's remarks to Mr. Adams was chosen extremely well.

- A. Correct
- B. Incorrect

13. I find it hard to believe Alexander's story.

- A. Correct
- B. Incorrect

Reading Practice Test

Read each passage, and then answer the questions following each passage by choosing the one best answer.

The best way to enforce the law is to write laws which are enforceable. This may sound too simplistic to some, but the thought does have a good deal of merit. Compliance with the law is based on respect for law enforcement. For some, compliance is most dependent on the fear of being caught. Both of these factors would seem to affect how most of us feel about obeying rules.

There are many laws on the books which are unenforceable. Some laws are so out of touch that they are considered to be nothing more than a bad joke.

For example, there are hundreds of laws which govern the type of sexual activity which adults may engage in while in the privacy of their homes. These are silly laws because they cannot be enforced. Moreover, the idea that such laws do exist tends to lessen respect for the more relevant laws. The prohibition of alcoholic beverages was a case study in bad law. What people elect to do at home should not be a concern to government. This point of view is widely held among lawyers and law enforcement officials. Some feel very strongly about this matter, especially when there is no "victim." Victimless crimes, they believe, are not crimes at all.

It is clear that no one is benefited by laws which cannot be enforced. To enforce such laws might require the police officer to commit an illegal act (i.e., trespass, conduct an illegal search, etc.). The legislatures of each state would be well advised to eliminate such laws. Respect for our important laws is at stake.

14. The main idea behind this passage is that bad laws
- A. promote illegal acts by citizens.
 - B. hamper law enforcement action by police.
 - C. create negative attitudes toward other laws.
15. Which factor was not mentioned as a reason for noncompliance with laws?
- A. fear of apprehension.
 - B. dislike for government.
 - C. respect for law.
16. Prohibition was unsuccessful because
- A. there is no harm to drinking.
 - B. it could not be enforced.
 - C. it was an invasion of privacy.
17. A "victimless crime" is one in which
- A. the victim has been disposed of.
 - B. the victim cannot be located.
 - C. there never was a victim.
18. A good title for this passage would be
- A. Enforcement Begins with the Law
 - B. The Need to Define Criminal Conduct
 - C. A Better Approach to Law Enforcement

Scoring Key

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

If you have any questions concerning the pre-employment test program, please contact the MCOLES Standards and Training Section at (517) 322-6525.