



Merit System Services  
*Integrated Case Worker*  
Sample Exam

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## SECTION 1

### **READING COMPREHENSION**

**DIRECTIONS:** The following questions are designed to measure your ability to read and understand written material. Each reading passage is followed by one or more questions about the material you have read. Base your answers only on the material you have read and not on any prior knowledge you may have. Darken the box corresponding to the single best answer for each of the questions.

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Employees are encouraged to participate in training opportunities that improve their job knowledge and skills. Employees will be reimbursed for the cost of job-related training opportunities when funds are available. These training opportunities include seminars, conferences, and courses offered by vendors or various professional or educational institutions and associations. Supervisory approval is necessary for training attendance during normally scheduled work hours. Personnel requesting reimbursement must submit a copy of the training request approved by their supervisor to the HR department at least two-weeks prior to attending the training.

1. According to the passage
  - a. job-related training opportunities must be approved by the employee's supervisor.
  - b. only training completed during work hours is eligible for reimbursement.
  - c. reimbursement requests must be approved by the employee's supervisor.
  - d. all job related training expense are reimbursed by the HR department.

Within the business world, there is an increase in the popularity of telecommuting. Organizations can take advantage of information technology to allow more employees to work from home without a loss in productivity. This provides organizations the flexibility of paying for office space and infrastructure on an as-needed basis.

2. Based on the reading passage, the primary advantage of telecommuting for organizations is
  - a. increased productivity of employees working remotely.
  - b. reduced need for employee labor due to better technology.
  - c. a reduction in the amount of salary that must be paid to employees.
  - d. a reduction in physical facilities costs.

## MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 27, 2010

To: All permanent, probationary, and limited-term staff

From: Richard Tamah, Social Services Director

Subject: Confidentiality Reminder

Client confidentiality is one of the most important aspects of the service that we provide to our clientele. Clients expect and are entitled to have their confidentiality protected. It has come to the attention of management that confidential information shared between a client and his/her case worker has been discussed in the office by staff who were not directly involved with the case.

Although the discussions reflected sympathy and concern for the affected client and his/her family, it must be remembered that what appears to be a harmless discussion on the surface can be construed as a breach of client confidentiality. Discussing a client's case with uninvolved staff is not only disrespectful to the client, but can lead to feelings of mistrust between our agency and our clients. Without trust, we will be unable to properly fulfill our agency's mission in serving those in need. If any staff member is having difficulty with a case, please seek the assistance of your direct supervisor.

In some situations, a supervisor may be able to use a difficult case as a learning tool by leading a discussion with staff as a group. However, the only time that sensitive case information can be discussed by staff not directly assigned to the case is when it meets the three conditions of an exempted learning opportunity:

- 1) A supervisor believes the case is a unique learning opportunity,
- 2) the client has given the supervisor written permission, and
- 3) the supervisor leads the discussion in a secure confidential area.

Please discuss any client related questions with your direct supervisor; do not discuss them with colleagues.

RT

DIRECTIONS: Answer the following question(s) based on the information given on the previous page(s). Darken the box on your answer sheet corresponding to the single best answer for each of the question(s).

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3. The main purpose of the memo is to
  - a. define which topics can be informally discussed by staff.
  - b. describe the specifics about a recent case of breached confidentiality.
  - c. explain how sensitive case information is to be handled by staff.
  - d. discuss how supervisors can use difficult cases for training opportunities.
  
4. In which situation can staff not directly assigned to a case discuss that case with other staff?
  - a. when the case represents a unique learning opportunity
  - b. when the discussion is held in private
  - c. when a supervisor leads the discussion
  - d. when the client has given permission
  
5. The most important reason that sensitive case information should not be discussed informally among staff members is that
  - a. clients may become unwilling to share important information with their caseworkers.
  - b. supervisors may be less aware of difficult cases.
  - c. facts about a client's case may be distorted unintentionally.
  - d. training opportunities will be more difficult to locate.

## SECTION 2

### INTERVIEWING

**DIRECTIONS:** The following questions are designed to measure your ability to conduct interviews for the purpose of determining eligibility for program assistance. Darken the box on your answer sheet corresponding to the single best answer for each question.

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6. Which interview approach is best for getting a client to answer questions about a sensitive topic?
  - a. Ask a series of broad questions before asking more focused questions about the sensitive topic.
  - b. Ask a series of direct questions about the sensitive topic before asking broader questions.
  - c. Ask for the client's demographic information first and then proceed to the focused questions about the sensitive topic.
  - d. Ask a broad open ended question about the client's background and listen for information about the sensitive topic.
  
7. The most important reason that an interviewer needs to understand the purpose of each interview question is to
  - a. know when the answer provided by the client is sufficient.
  - b. be able to change the wording of questions when necessary.
  - c. instill confidence in the client during the interview.
  - d. know which questions are applicable.
  
8. An interviewer who noticeably nods her head during client responses to interview questions may
  - a. reduce the need to rephrase questions.
  - b. reduce the accuracy of the responses provided by the client.
  - c. increase the accuracy of the responses provided by the client.
  - d. increase the client's trust in the interviewer.

9. Which type of interview provides the interviewer flexibility to adapt interview questions based on the topics mentioned by the interviewee?
- a. structured interview
  - b. unstructured interview
  - c. background interview
  - d. behavioral interview
10. In which situation should a probing question be used?
- a. to open the interview
  - b. to build rapport with the client
  - c. when you believe the client has not said everything she knows
  - d. when the client doesn't understand the original question

### SECTION 3

#### **CUSTOMER SERVICE PRINCIPLES**

DIRECTIONS: Darken the box on your answer sheet corresponding to the single best answer for each question.

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11. How should you initially handle a customer who appears very angry or frustrated?
  - a. Allow her an opportunity to express their feelings.
  - b. Ask her to try and think reasonably about the situation.
  - c. Provide her with facts and information about the situation.
  - d. Offer to compensate her for their time and trouble.
  
12. Which is the best response to a frustrated customer's request that you know cannot be met?
  - a. "I will try to get that done."
  - b. "I don't know if that can be done."
  - c. "We don't normally meet that type of request."
  - d. "Here is what I can do."
  
13. One of the best methods for ensuring that you have correctly understood what a customer has said is to
  - a. repeat what the customer said using the customer's own words.
  - b. restate what the customer said using your own words.
  - c. ask the customer to repeat the statement.
  - d. ask the customer a series of closed ended questions about what was said.
  
14. During a face-to-face conversation, which characteristic of the speaker has the greatest influence on the message that is received by the listener?
  - a. body language
  - b. vocal tone
  - c. choice of words
  - d. physical appearance

15. Using acronyms when speaking with customers is likely to
- a. make it more difficult for customers to understand what you said.
  - b. convey a sense of expertise and command of the subject matter to customers.
  - c. allow you to get to important points more quickly.
  - d. reduce the need for lengthy and confusing explanations.
16. When a customer speaks to you using a fairly slow rate of speech, your response should be spoken at
- a. a rate that is slightly faster than your customer's.
  - b. a rate that is similar to your customer's.
  - c. your normal rate of speech.
  - d. a rate that is slightly slower than your customer's.

## SECTION 4

### **WRITTEN COMMUNICATION**

**DIRECTIONS:** The following sentences are designed to measure your knowledge of punctuation. For each item, select the sentence that contains an error in punctuation. Then darken the box on your answer sheet that corresponds to your selection.

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17.   a.    Thank you, Ms. Lane, for all that you have done for the organization.  
      b.    To whom should this letter of reference be addressed?  
      c.    We didn't finish by the projected deadline; consequently, we now have to put in overtime.  
      d.    The work was completed on schedule but it didn't meet the client's needs.
18.   a.    The required steps are as follows: establishing eligibility criteria, screening, and providing services that meet the eligibility criteria.  
      b.    The enclosed test, Form B, is representative of the entry-level written tests.  
      c.    The conference will be held on Wednesday, October 3, in San Francisco.  
      d.    He provided them with a stern warning, however; it was ignored.

**DIRECTIONS:** The following items are designed to measure your ability to identify words that are spelled incorrectly. For each item, choose the one word which is misspelled. Darken the box on your answer sheet that corresponds to the misspelled word.

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19.   a.    laison  
      b.    briefing  
      c.    conscientious  
      d.    referring
20.   a.    temperamental  
      b.    legitamate  
      c.    accommodate  
      d.    condemn

DIRECTIONS: The following questions are designed to measure your knowledge of English grammar. For each question, select the sentence that is grammatically incorrect. Darken the box on your answer sheet corresponding to the single best answer.

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21. a. It is important that all reports contain a discussion of plausible explanations.  
b. The format used for a report should be determined by the report's purpose.  
c. The layout of a descriptive or analytical report depend on how the information will be used.  
d. Meaningful information in a variety of styles demands timeliness and adequate detail.
22. a. I sent copies of the report to both offices.  
b. Kim and Terri were driving to the conference.  
c. John and I will be attending the softball game.  
d. Kelli couldn't of been at the office any sooner due to traffic.

DIRECTIONS: The following items are designed to measure your vocabulary knowledge. For each capitalized word, select the one word below it which is closest in meaning. Darken the box on your answer sheet that corresponds to the single best answer for each of the following questions.

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23. STRATIFY

- a. remove  
b. layer  
c. displace  
d. build

24. PERVASIVE

- a. extensive  
b. ambiguous  
c. trivial  
d. direct

SECTION 5

**BENEFIT CALCULATIONS**

**BENEFIT PROGRAM RULES:**

1. A family can receive either the monthly maximum allowance or the sum of the maximum monthly needs allowances, whichever amount is lower.
2. For the monthly maximum allowance, a child has to reside in the home for more than one week each month to earn the additional child allowance. Assume the child lives with the parent(s) full time unless otherwise noted.

**MONTHLY MAXIMUM ALLOWANCE**

	<b>Children in Family</b>	<b>Maximum Allowance</b>
One Parent in Home	1	\$450
Two Parents in Home	1	\$520

(Add \$45 for each additional child)

**MAXIMUM MONTHLY NEEDS ALLOWANCES**

<b>Need</b>	<b>Number of Persons in Family</b>						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	over 6
Housing	\$200	\$225	\$300	\$350	\$450	\$500	\$600
Food	\$40	\$53	\$64	\$79	\$88	\$93	\$106
Utilities	\$15	\$18	\$26	\$38	\$43	\$57	\$73

DIRECTIONS: Answer the following question(s) based on the information given on the previous page(s). Darken the box on your answer sheet corresponding to the single best answer for each of the question(s).

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25. What is the monthly maximum allowance for a single parent with three children?
- a. \$495
  - b. \$520
  - c. \$540
  - d. \$585
26. Mr. and Mrs. Seifer have five children who live with them full time and one daughter who lives with them every other weekend. What is their total monthly allowance?
- a. \$695
  - b. \$700
  - c. \$745
  - d. \$779
27. What is the total monthly allowance for a single parent family of seven?
- a. \$720
  - b. \$745
  - c. \$765
  - d. \$779

**Monthly Food Assistance Allotment:** Use the chart below to determine the amount of food assistance available to a household based on the number of persons living in that household and the household's net monthly income. For benefit allotment purposes, a person is considered a household member if that person has lived in the residence for a continuous period of at least nine months out of the previous 12 months. A household's food assistance allotment is increased by 10% if more than three persons living in the household are 16 years of age or older.

Monthly Net Income	Food Assistance Allotment by Household Size					
	Number of Persons in the Household					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Less than \$400	\$35	\$64	\$92	\$117	\$139	\$166
\$400 - \$599	\$34	\$63	\$91	\$116	\$138	\$166
\$600 - \$799	\$34	\$63	\$90	\$115	\$137	\$165
\$800 - \$999	\$33	\$62	\$90	\$115	\$137	\$165
\$1,000 - \$1,199	\$33	\$62	\$89	\$114	\$136	\$164
\$1,200 - \$1,399	\$32	\$61	\$89	\$114	\$136	\$164
\$1,400 - \$1,599	\$32	\$61	\$88	\$113	\$135	\$163
\$1,600 - \$1,799	\$30	\$60	\$88	\$113	\$135	\$163
\$1,800 - \$2,000	\$30	\$60	\$87	\$112	\$134	\$162
More than \$2,000	\$29	\$59	\$87	\$112	\$134	\$162

DIRECTIONS: Answer the following question(s) based on the information given on the previous page(s). Darken the box on your answer sheet corresponding to the single best answer for each of the question(s)

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28. Two adults and two children (ages 10 and 16) are living in a household with a monthly net income of \$1,978. What is their food assistance allotment?
- a. \$60.00
  - b. \$66.00
  - c. \$112.00
  - d. \$123.20
29. Three adults and two children (ages 14 and 17) are living in a household with a monthly net income of \$682. What is their food assistance allotment?
- a. \$90.00
  - b. \$99.00
  - c. \$137.00
  - d. \$150.70
30. What is the maximum food assistance allotment available for a household with one adult and two children (ages 16 and 17)?
- a. \$87.00
  - b. \$92.00
  - c. \$95.70
  - d. \$101.20