



Correctional Officer

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Practice Questions

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1. A core purpose of a correctional officer code of ethics is to:

- A. Guide professional conduct and maintain public trust
- B. Increase the number of disciplinary write-ups issued
- C. Replace the need for any agency policy manual
- D. Set inmate commissary prices

2. An inmate complies and stops resisting after being handcuffed. The officer should:

- A. Immediately stop using force once compliance is achieved
- B. Continue applying pressure to teach a lesson
- C. Apply one more strike for good measure
- D. Leave him restrained on the floor indefinitely

3. A housing unit has 48 inmates on the first tier and 37 on the second tier. How many inmates are in the unit in total?

- A. 85
- B. 75
- C. 84
- D. 95

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4. In corrections work, what is the key difference between 'seeing' and 'observing'?

- A. Observing is the active, deliberate noticing and interpreting of details, while seeing is passive
- B. Seeing requires training but observing does not
- C. Observing only happens during cell searches
- D. Seeing and observing are identical terms



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5. Read the passage: "When the facility began rotating officers' posts regularly, fewer inappropriate relationships between staff and inmates developed, because familiarity and routine, which manipulation often exploits, were disrupted." Why did rotating posts reduce inappropriate staff-inmate relationships?

- A. It disrupted the familiarity and routine that manipulation exploits
- B. It increased officer pay
- C. It reduced the inmate population
- D. It shortened shifts

6. All inmates in Cell Block A are required to attend the morning count. Inmate Reyes is in Cell Block A. Which conclusion follows logically?

- A. Inmate Reyes is required to attend the morning count
- B. Inmate Reyes may skip the morning count
- C. Inmate Reyes is in Cell Block B
- D. No conclusion can be drawn

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7. An attorney cross-examining an officer will often compare the officer's testimony to:

- A. The officer's original written report for consistency
- B. The inmate's commissary list
- C. The weather report
- D. The officer's social media

8. What is the primary purpose of a formal inmate count in a correctional facility?

- A. To verify that every inmate is physically present and accounted for
- B. To clean the housing units
- C. To distribute mail to inmates
- D. To schedule recreation time

9. Acting 'with integrity' as a correctional officer most directly means:

- A. Being honest and consistent whether or not anyone is watching
- B. Following orders even when they are unlawful
- C. Reporting only the violations committed by inmates
- D. Avoiding paperwork to save time



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10. Which situation generally justifies a higher level of force?

- A. An inmate verbally refuses a meal
- B. An inmate is actively assaulting another person
- C. An inmate is sleeping past count
- D. An inmate quietly refuses to make his bed

11. A facility is rated for a capacity of 320 inmates and currently holds 274. How many more inmates can it hold before reaching capacity?

- A. 54
- B. 46
- C. 56
- D. 44

12. What is the primary purpose of an inmate count?

- A. To clean the housing unit
- B. To physically verify that all inmates are present and accounted for
- C. To distribute meals
- D. To schedule recreation time

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13. Read the passage: "An inmate who usually argues every rule suddenly became extremely polite and cooperative with one specific officer, complimenting her constantly and offering to do small favors only for her." What should the officer most reasonably suspect?

- A. The inmate has genuinely reformed overnight
- B. The inmate may be attempting to manipulate or groom her
- C. The inmate is preparing to file a complaint
- D. The inmate is unwell



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14. If an inmate is placed in protective custody, then the inmate is housed separately. Inmate Diaz is in protective custody. What follows?

- A. Inmate Diaz is housed separately
- B. Inmate Diaz is in general population
- C. Inmate Diaz is not in protective custody
- D. Nothing can be concluded

15. An officer must record a conclusion about an inmate's mental state. The most defensible approach is to:

- A. State 'the inmate was suicidal' as fact
- B. Describe the specific statements and behaviors observed, report them, and note any referral made
- C. Avoid mentioning mental state entirely
- D. Diagnose the inmate in the report

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16. During a formal count, what should an officer confirm about each inmate?

- A. Only that a body is in the bunk
- B. That living, breathing flesh is observed
- C. The inmate's mood
- D. The inmate's commissary balance

17. Which statement best reflects the ethical principle of impartiality in corrections?

- A. Officers may favor inmates who cooperate as informants
- B. Officers must treat all inmates fairly regardless of race, religion, or offense
- C. Officers should give better treatment to inmates of their own background
- D. Officers may relax rules for inmates who are friendly

18. Use of deadly force by a correctional officer is generally justified only when:

- A. An inmate insults the officer
- B. An inmate refuses to return to his cell
- C. There is an imminent threat of death or serious bodily harm
- D. Contraband is found in a cell

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19. Each of 6 housing pods holds 24 inmates. What is the total inmate capacity of the 6 pods?

- A. 124
- B. 142
- C. 144
- D. 164

20. Observing that inmates suddenly stop talking and watch officers closely may indicate what?

- A. The unit is unusually calm and safe
- B. Something may be about to happen or is being concealed
- C. The inmates are simply tired
- D. The officers should leave immediately

21. Read the passage: "Always check both sides of every door before entering a housing unit. Never assume a cell is empty. Confirm that restraints are double-locked. These small habits are what keep officers alive." What is the author's primary purpose?

- A. To instruct officers on safety habits
- B. To entertain readers with prison stories
- C. To criticize lazy officers
- D. To describe the layout of a housing unit

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22. An officer notices that whenever the heating fails, inmate complaints rise sharply. Which is the most reasonable conclusion?

- A. Heating failures likely contribute to increased complaints
- B. Complaints cause heating to fail
- C. Heating and complaints are unrelated
- D. Inmates control the heating system

23. An officer writes that a fight occurred 'in the dayroom near the television.' This detail satisfies which reporting element?

- A. Where
- B. When
- C. Who
- D. Why



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24. What is a 'standing count' typically used for?

- A. Counting inmates while they sleep
- B. Counting only inmates in segregation
- C. Requiring inmates to stand by their bunks so officers can clearly verify each person
- D. Counting recreation equipment

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25. An officer is offered a small cash 'tip' by an inmate's family member to deliver a letter. The ethical response is to:

- A. Accept it since the amount is small
- B. Deliver the letter but return the cash
- C. Decline the money and report the offer through proper channels
- D. Keep the cash but refuse the letter

26. After any use-of-force incident, the officer must:

- A. Say nothing to avoid liability
- B. Ask other inmates to forget it happened
- C. Delete any camera footage
- D. Document the incident accurately and report it promptly

27. An officer must distribute 96 meal trays equally among 8 tables. How many trays go to each table?

- A. 10
- B. 14
- C. 11
- D. 12

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28. A systematic 'top-to-bottom' method of describing a person usually begins with which area?

- A. The head and face
- B. The shoes
- C. The waist
- D. The hands



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29. Read the passage: "The Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) requires facilities to have a zero-tolerance policy toward sexual abuse, to train staff to prevent and respond to it, and to provide multiple confidential ways for inmates to report abuse. Reports must be investigated, and retaliation against those who report is prohibited." According to the passage, what is PROHIBITED under PREA?

- A. Training staff on prevention
- B. Providing ways to report abuse
- C. Retaliation against those who report abuse
- D. Investigating reports

30. A rule states: 'All visitors must show valid photo ID before entry.' A visitor presents an expired ID. What follows?

- A. The visitor should not be granted entry
- B. The visitor must be granted entry
- C. The visitor needs no ID
- D. The rule does not apply to visitors



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Answer Key & Explanations

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1. A — Guide professional conduct and maintain public trust

A code of ethics establishes standards of professional conduct and integrity that preserve public trust; it complements, not replaces, agency policy.

2. A — Immediately stop using force once compliance is achieved

Force must cease the moment the inmate is under control; continuing after compliance becomes excessive and unlawful.

3. A — 85

Add the two tiers: $48 + 37 = 85$ inmates.

4. A — Observing is the active, deliberate noticing and interpreting of details, while seeing is passive

Seeing is a passive sensory event; observing is the deliberate, attentive process of noticing, interpreting, and retaining details, which is the skill officers must develop.

5. A — It disrupted the familiarity and routine that manipulation exploits

The passage explains that rotation disrupted the familiarity and routine manipulation relies on. The other options are not the stated reason.

6. A — Inmate Reyes is required to attend the morning count

This is a valid syllogism: all members of a group have a property, and Reyes is a member, so Reyes has the property. The conclusion follows necessarily.

7. A — The officer's original written report for consistency

Inconsistencies between testimony and the report are a common avenue for impeaching credibility.

8. A — To verify that every inmate is physically present and accounted for

Counts confirm that all inmates are present and accounted for, which is the most basic security control against escape.

9. A — Being honest and consistent whether or not anyone is watching

Integrity means consistent honesty and adherence to ethical standards regardless of oversight; it never requires obeying unlawful orders.

10. B — An inmate is actively assaulting another person

An active physical assault poses an imminent threat to safety, justifying a higher, proportionate level of force, unlike passive or verbal noncompliance.

11. B — 46

Subtract the current count from capacity: $320 - 274 = 46$ inmates.

12. B — To physically verify that all inmates are present and accounted for

Counts confirm the physical presence of every inmate, immediately revealing escapes, deaths, or



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unaccounted movement.

13. B — The inmate may be attempting to manipulate or groom her

A sudden shift to flattery and favors directed at one officer is a classic grooming and manipulation tactic. The officer should be cautious rather than assume genuine reform.

14. A — Inmate Diaz is housed separately

This is valid modus ponens: the condition is met (protective custody), so the consequent (housed separately) follows necessarily.

15. B — Describe the specific statements and behaviors observed, report them, and note any referral made

Officers report observed behaviors and statements and refer for evaluation; they do not diagnose, but they must not omit safety-relevant observations.

16. B — That living, breathing flesh is observed

A proper count requires officers to observe living, breathing flesh, not just a shape under a blanket, to prevent dummies being used to mask an escape.

17. B — Officers must treat all inmates fairly regardless of race, religion, or offense

Impartiality requires consistent, fair treatment of all inmates without favoritism based on personal characteristics or relationships.

18. C — There is an imminent threat of death or serious bodily harm

Deadly force is reserved for imminent threats of death or serious bodily injury; lesser provocations never justify it.

19. C — 144

Multiply pods by capacity: $6 \times 24 = 144$ inmates.

20. B — Something may be about to happen or is being concealed

A sudden hush and heightened attention to officers can signal that inmates anticipate or are hiding an event, warranting increased alertness.

21. A — To instruct officers on safety habits

The passage gives direct safety instructions and explains why they matter, so its purpose is to instruct. It is not narrative entertainment, criticism, or description of layout.

22. A — Heating failures likely contribute to increased complaints

A consistent pattern where one event precedes another suggests a contributing causal link from heating failure to complaints, the only reasonable direction given the facts.

23. A — Where

A specific physical location answers the 'where' element of the report.

24. C — Requiring inmates to stand by their bunks so officers can clearly verify each person

A standing count requires inmates to stand at their assigned locations so officers can clearly see and verify each individual, reducing the chance of concealment.

25. C — Decline the money and report the offer through proper channels

Accepting anything of value from inmates or their associates is a conflict of interest and security risk; the offer



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should be declined and reported.

26. D — Document the incident accurately and report it promptly

Accurate, prompt documentation and reporting are required for accountability, medical follow-up, and legal protection.

27. D — 12

Divide the trays by the tables: $96 / 8 = 12$ trays per table.

28. A — The head and face

A top-to-bottom (head-to-toe) description starts at the head/face and works downward, ensuring no major area is skipped.

29. C — Retaliation against those who report abuse

The passage states retaliation against those who report abuse is prohibited. Training, reporting channels, and investigations are required, not prohibited.

30. A — The visitor should not be granted entry

An expired ID is not valid, so the requirement for a valid photo ID is unmet, and entry should be denied per the rule.



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