CJ 2300

PLA Content Guide

Policing in a Democracy

- Role of Police: Understand the core function of police in society and how their duties align with democratic principles (e.g., rule of law, protecting civil liberties).
- Police Report Basics: Know the purpose and characteristics of a well-written police report narrative, focusing on the principles of clarity, conciseness, and accuracy.

Police History

- Origin and Development: Describe the historical evolution of policing in the U.S..
- Eras of Policing: Be familiar with the major eras of policing (e.g., Political Era, Reform Era, Community Era) and their defining characteristics, management styles, and primary goals.

Legal Issues

- Constitutional Framework: Analyze the major legal limitations that govern police conduct (e.g., Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Amendments).
- Landmark Cases: Be familiar with key Supreme Court cases that established rules for police practices, such as search and seizure and interrogation.

Police Strategies

- Different Strategies: Evaluate various police strategies (e.g., community policing, problem-oriented policing, data-driven approaches).
- Problem Solving: Understand the framework for systematic problem-solving and how officers can apply it to address crime and community issues.

Police Management

- Organizational Structure: Understand the typical police organizational framework, its hierarchy, and common organizational problems.
- Leadership & Supervision: Know different management styles and their impact on police work, officer morale, and effectiveness.

Organizational Change

- Challenges to Change: Analyze issues and solutions for implementing organizational change and reform within police departments.
- Innovation & Reform: Know models and processes for introducing new strategies and technologies into a police organization.

Selection and Development

- Personnel Process: Identify the steps in police recruitment, selection, and training (e.g., academy and field training).
- Job Requirements: Understand the qualifications, background checks, and psychological screening for police candidates.

Field Operations

- Foundations of Patrol: Understand the primary functions of patrol, non-emergency duties, and how departments allocate resources.
- Warrior and Guardian Philosophy: Be prepared to discuss the contrasting concepts of the warrior versus the guardian approach to policing and the role of police professionalism.

Police Behavior

- Police Culture: Analyze the influence of the police subculture on officer behavior and decision-making.
- Discretion: Understand the concept of police discretion (the choice of actions in specific situations) and the factors that influence it.

Force and Coercion

- Use of Force: Evaluate the legal and ethical standards for the use of force and coercion in policing.
- Misconduct: Differentiate between legitimate force, excessive force, and various types of police misconduct.

Accountability and Ethics

- Accountability: Understand mechanisms for police accountability (e.g., internal affairs, civilian review boards, early warning systems).
- Ethical Standards: Define police ethics and common forms of police corruption or misconduct.

Diversity

- Workforce & Community Diversity: Analyze the importance of diversity and inclusion in policing and challenges faced by officers from diverse backgrounds.
- Specialized Units: Be prepared to discuss the function and role of various specialized police units or duties (e.g., vice squad, SWAT, detective assignments).

Stress and Officer Safety

- Sources of Stress: Identify the major sources of police stress (e.g., organizational, operational, external).
- Safety & Wellness: Understand the consequences of stress and strategies for officer health and safety.

Higher Education

- Education & Policing: Analyze the arguments for and against requiring higher education for police officers.
- Impact: Evaluate the effects of a college education on police performance, behavior, and career advancement.