



# PENNSYLVANIA STATE POLICE CADET ORAL EXAMINATION CANDIDATE PREPARATION GUIDE

Congratulations for advancing to the Pennsylvania State Police (PSP) Cadet oral examination--the next step toward your goal of becoming a PSP Cadet. Following are guidelines to help you understand the process and prepare for the oral examination.

## BEFORE THE EXAMINATION

- You will have the opportunity to self-schedule the oral examination within a range of dates and times at the location of your choice, subject to availability. If you are unable to appear as scheduled you may reschedule the examination online without notifying PSP.
- Allow sufficient travel time in order to arrive at the examination site **prior** to your scheduled appointment time.
- You are expected to wear professional business attire for the examination, as though you are interviewing for a job in an office. In a formal business environment, the standard of dressing is a suit or a jacket and pants. Women may also choose a skirt, or a dress paired with appropriate accessories.
- Bring official photo identification with you. Acceptable forms of photo ID include: driver's license or another official transportation department ID card, U.S. Passport, or military identification. **You will not be tested without an acceptable photo ID.**

## AT THE EXAMINATION

- When you arrive at the test site, you will join a group of other candidates who have been scheduled for the same reporting time. A series of examination reporting times are scheduled throughout the day at each test site.
- When arriving early you should wait in the reception area until your scheduled appointment time.
- **At your scheduled appointment time**, State Police staff will help you complete administrative paperwork and provide you instructions for the examination.
- Two PSP Officers will serve as your oral examination raters and will be dressed in business clothes. One of the two raters will escort you to a private room, and will ask if you have any questions about the instructions provided to you during the administrative period before the examination. The raters will then administer the oral examination.

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**NOTE:** Raters will only answer questions about the examination instructions. The raters will not answer questions about the examination contents. Questions about the hiring process or the position must be directed to a PSP Recruiter.

## THE EXAMINATION

- The oral examination includes questions about your interest in the position and gives you the opportunity to describe how you would respond to certain real-life situations.
- Once the examination has begun, you may not ask any further questions about the examination process or instructions. The raters will only state the examination items (job interest questions and real-life situations) exactly as they are written.
- The raters will ask you to respond to the examination items one at a time. You will be given a copy of the examination so that you can follow along, and will be instructed when to turn to the next item. When you are completely finished giving your response to an item, the raters will advance to the next item. Once you begin a new item, you will not be permitted to return to any previous item.
- In responding to the real-life situations, you will be asked to describe the specific actions you would take in that situation and explain the reasons for those actions.
  - As written, the situations are very brief and do not contain a lot of details.
  - To help in responding to the situations, you may make assumptions or add details. If you do, you must tell the raters exactly what assumptions you have made or details you have added. You may not change the overall concept of the situation.
- The real-life situations will not require technical knowledge of law enforcement. You should respond to each real-life situation honestly and naturally from the viewpoint of a **civilian**, not as a law enforcement officer. The technical law enforcement knowledge required for the position will be provided during Cadet training at the PSP Academy.
- You will have a total of twenty five (25) minutes to complete the examination. At the conclusion of the examination, you will be escorted by one of the raters back to the reception area.

## Examination Evaluation

- The raters will evaluate a number of qualities and abilities that have been identified as critical to successful performance as a PSP Trooper. These include:

Communication	Effectively, thoroughly, and accurately exchanges thoughts, messages or information through speaking and listening. Uses appropriate language to communicate on the same level as others.
Decision-making	Makes sound and timely decisions. Pays attention to and takes into account all relevant information in making decisions and developing effective solutions to problems. Makes rational decisions under pressure and/or without direction from another person.
Empathy	Exhibits understanding and sensitivity to another individual's situation or feelings. Desires to understand a problem from another's perspective. Shows willingness to consider how you would want to be treated in a similar situation.
Honesty	Demonstrates a desire to do the right thing. Accurately reports events as they occur. Adheres to societal rules and laws.
Initiative	Takes proactive actions and persists in efforts to reach goals by overcoming difficult obstacles. Motivated to take effective action without requiring direct orders from another person.
Self-confidence	Believes in personal ability to judge and handle situations successfully. Appears comfortable in diverse situations and projects an image of confidence when under pressure without appearing arrogant.
Self-control	Remains calm and maintains awareness of the consequences of personal actions in difficult situations. Shows a level of respect for the other individuals in a situation.

- Each question and real-life situation is designed to evaluate several of these qualities and abilities.
- The raters have been trained in the proper methods to observe, record, and evaluate your responses.
- Approximately four weeks after the last day of this oral examination period, you will receive the combined results of your written and oral examinations and your position on the eligibility list.

**Thank you for your interest in becoming a member of the Pennsylvania State Police.**