2027 Police Sergeant Orientation Guide

Mikie Sherrill, Governor

Mary Cruz, Acting Chair/Chief Executive Officer

***Please Note: The year listed on the orientation guide refers to the year the exam will take place. This guide applies to both candidates from the current administration and make-up candidates from an earlier administration who will be tested in 2027.**

This material is the property of the NJ Civil Service Commission (CSC). Material should not be altered, duplicated, or used for training purposes without expressed permission from the NJ CSC.

Table of Contents

I. INTRODUCTION ..... p. 1

II. PRE-EXAM INFORMATION ..... p. 1-3
- A. Date and Location ..... p. 1
- B. What Candidates SHOULD Bring to the Exam ..... p. 2
- C. What Candidates Should NOT Bring to the Exam ..... p. 2
- D. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Policy ..... p. 2
- E. Make-Up Policy ..... p. 2-3
- F. Exam Information for Make-Up Candidates ..... p. 3

III. EXAM INFORMATION ..... p. 3-5
- A. Exam Development ..... p. 3
- B. Written Exam Portion ..... p. 4
- C. Video-Based Portion ..... p. 4-5
- D. Potential Source Material ..... p. 5

IV. EXAM ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION ..... p. 5-6
- A. Late Policy ..... p. 6
- B. Test Adminstration Logistics ..... p. 6
- C. Test Time ..... p. 6

V. POST-EXAM INFORMATION ..... p. 6-8
- A. Explanation of Scoring Process ..... p. 6-7
- B. Review and Appeal Information ..... p. 7
- C. Explanation of Seniority ..... p. 7
- D. Calculation of Seniority Score ..... p. 8
- E. Explanation of Exam Results and Promotions ..... p. 8

VI. STUDY TIPS ..... p. 9-15
- A. Descriptions and Study Tips for Different Learning Styles ..... p. 9-10
- B. Understanding and Reducing Test Anxiety ..... p. 11-13
- C. Tips for Answering Multiple-Choice Questions ..... p. 13
- D. Technical Vocabulary List ..... p. 14-15

VII. SAMPLE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ..... p. 16-22
- A. Written Exam Portion ..... p. 16-19
- B. Video-Based Portion ..... p. 19-22

VIII. CONCLUSION ..... p. 22

This material is the property of the NJ Civil Service Commission (CSC). Material should not be altered, duplicated, or used for training purposes without expressed permission from the NJ CSC.

I. INTRODUCTION

The exam will be designed based on information obtained from the most recent job analysis verification of the Police Sergeant position, which includes descriptions of the duties performed by incumbents and identifies the knowledge, skills, and abilities that are required to effectively perform each of these duties.

The New Jersey Civil Service Commission (CSC) has prepared this supplemental orientation guide for promotional candidates who will participate in the 2027 Police Sergeant exam. The information in this booklet is designed to help candidates better understand the testing process and the types of questions they will encounter on the Police Sergeant exam.

The information contained in the guide is intended to be an aid and should not be considered exhaustive. Additionally, the information presented is subject to change, and candidates are encouraged to periodically check the CSC website to look for updates. Any changes, additions, and/or updates to specific sections of the guide will be indicated on the table of contents page. The updated information will be written in italics so that it can be distinguished from previously included information.

Please note that no study group has been involved in the development or review of CSC exams, and at no time has any exam material been provided to such groups. Additionally, the CSC is not responsible for any claims made by study groups or the manner in which they represent themselves for advertisement purposes.

II. PRE-EXAM INFORMATION

A. Date and Location

The tentative timeframe to administer the Police Sergeant exam is February 2027. In the event there are difficulties scheduling the exam for any unforeseen reason, this timeframe may change. A specific test date will not be determined until test centers have confirmed their availability. Once the specific test date has been determined, it will be posted in the Law Enforcement Status Report (available via the CSC's website at https://nj.gov/csc/jobs/publicsafety/law_titles.shtml). Candidate exam notices will be mailed two to three weeks prior to the test date and will confirm the test date, report time, and location. Candidates should plan their route to the test center in advance of the test date as soon as the test location is made available. Candidates are encouraged to arrive early, since candidates arriving late will NOT be admitted to the exam.

This material is the property of the NJ Civil Service Commission (CSC). Material should not be altered, duplicated, or used for training purposes without expressed permission from the NJ CSC.

B. What Candidates **SHOULD** Bring to the Exam

Candidates arriving to the test center should have their notification card and a valid photo I.D. Candidates arriving at the test center without their notification card should report directly to Room A with their photo ID, so that the Center Supervisor can issue them a new card. Candidates arriving at the test center without a valid photo ID **WILL NOT** be admitted to the exam. Answer sheets for CSC multiple-choice exams are scored electronically, so candidates should bring No. 2 pencils to the exam. In addition, candidates are permitted to bring highlighters for use during the exam.

C. What Candidates Should **NOT** Bring to the Exam

With the threat of high-tech cheating on the rise, it is the policy of the N.J. Civil Service Commission (CSC) that *possession* of electronic devices, such as cell phones, pagers, tablets, e-book readers, smart glasses, digital watches, fitness trackers, PDAs, or any device with recording/imaging, communication, or internet capabilities is strictly prohibited at the test center. **Candidates who are seen with these devices in the test center at ANY time (including before and after their individual examination has been completed), even in a power-off mode, will be disqualified.** The device may also be confiscated to ensure that an attempt was not made to compromise the testing process. In addition, note paper, any study or reference materials, briefcases, backpacks, and other personal items should not be brought inside the test center. For more information see: https://www.nj.gov/csc/faq/cellphones.shtml

D. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Policy

Candidates who require special assistance or ADA accommodations for this exam must check the corresponding box on the “Preferences” tab of their online application, regardless of whether or not they have previously been approved for accommodations with CSC in the past. Candidates who are indicating a need for accommodations for the first time will subsequently be contacted with further instructions.

Upon receipt of their exam notice with the test date, time, and location information, candidates who are already on file with CSC as being approved for accommodations must call (609) 292-4144, extension 1991001, in order to discuss the specifics of their accommodation needs for this exam.

E. Make-Up Policy

According to the New Jersey Administrative Code 4A:4-2.9(b), make-up examinations for public safety open competitive and promotional examinations may only be authorized for the following reasons:

1. Debilitating injury or illness requiring an extended convalescent period, provided the candidate submits a doctor’s certification containing a diagnosis and a statement clearly showing that the candidate’s physical condition precluded his or her participation in the examination;
2. Death in the candidate’s immediate family as evidenced by a copy of the death certificate;
3. A candidate’s wedding which cannot be reasonably changed; as evidenced by relevant documentation;

This material is the property of the NJ Civil Service Commission (CSC). Material should not be altered, duplicated, or used for training purposes without expressed permission from the NJ CSC.

4. Military service; When required for certain persons returning from military service (see 4A:4-4.6); or
5. Error by the Civil Service Commission or Appointing Authority.

Make-up requests, with supporting documentation, must be submitted in writing within five days of receipt of the test notification. However, in situations involving an illness, death, or natural disaster that occurs on or immediately before the test date, a request for make-up must be made in writing no later than five days after the test date. Written requests for make-up examinations should be mailed to: NJCSC Make-Up Exam Unit, P.O. Box 310, Trenton, NJ 08625-0310.

All make-up requests based on medical grounds must include a New Jersey Civil Service Commission Medical Authorization for Make-Up Examinations form (DPF-728), completed by the treating physician. This form can be obtained from our website at https://www.nj.gov/csc/about/publications/forms/pdf/dpf-728.pdf or by contacting the CSC's Information Center at (609) 292-4144.

Additionally, your treating physician must provide a separate detailed letter containing a diagnosis and statement clearly indicating why your physical condition will prevent you from taking the examination as scheduled. This letter should include the date the injury/illness began, the date of your last office visit, and the earliest date you can take the test. Information on your leave time from work because of your illness/injury should also be included. The documentation must be on official letterhead, written in layman's terms and legible. If insufficient, untimely, or illegible information is provided, your request will be denied.

F. Exam Information for Make-Up Candidates

Because of exam security concerns relating to the illicit discussion and/or dissemination of test content, the make-up exam for this announcement may not be identical to the original exam. It will, however, match the content specifications of the original exam as closely as possible. This means that the make-up exam will measure, in equal proportion, the same knowledge and/or abilities that were measured by the original exam. It will also be administered and scored in the same manner as the original exam. If a different exam is used for make-up purposes, make-up candidates may be required to obtain or use resource material for test preparation/study purposes that is particular to the make-up examination.

III. EXAM INFORMATION

A. Exam Development

A job analysis was conducted to identify the knowledge and abilities that are necessary to perform the duties of a Police Sergeant. A job analysis is the process of critically examining the Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSAs) required to perform successfully on the job. As a part of this verification process, staff from the CSC has visited various police departments throughout the state. Information was gathered about the job through interviews and surveys of on-the-job activities of incumbent (permanent) Police Sergeants. Based on the results, critical KSAs were identified and considered for inclusion on the exam. In order to best measure these KSAs, the Police Sergeant exam will be divided into two sections: a written exam portion and a video-based portion.

This material is the property of the NJ Civil Service Commission (CSC). Material should not be altered, duplicated, or used for training purposes without expressed permission from the NJ CSC.

B. Written Exam Portion

For this portion of the exam, candidates are to assume the role of a Police Sergeant. The written exam will consist of standard multiple-choice test items. For each test item, candidates will be asked a question preceded by a statement, situation, or other stimulus, such as a brief scenario. Candidates should carefully read all directions provided in the exam and, unless otherwise instructed, should choose the BEST answer from the options provided. Each multiple-choice question will have four choices from which candidates will select one answer which BEST addresses the problem or situation. Answer choices will be labeled as (a), (b), (c), and (d). Candidates will enter their answers on a standardized answer sheet. The answer chosen must be marked on the answer sheet. This is done by completely filling in the appropriate space on their answer sheet which designates the letter that corresponds to their answer choice. No credit will be awarded for any answer that is not properly marked on the answer sheet.

Test questions related to this portion of the exam may be based upon the application of New Jersey Criminal Code 2C, Title 39, New Jersey Attorney General Guidelines and Directives, New Jersey and United States Case Law, as well as other related areas.

C. Video-Based Portion

In this part of the exam, candidates will again assume the role of a Police Sergeant as they view scenarios associated with the duties of a Police Sergeant. Each video will present information and circumstances which candidates will have to consider before responding to the questions.

Questions for the video portion of the exam may be presented using two formats (see examples beginning on page 12-13). Candidates should be prepared to encounter the test format options as explained below:

Multiple-Choice: Following information presented in the video, questions will have up to four choices from which candidates will select one answer which BEST addresses the problem or situation.

Two-Option Format: Following information presented in the video, candidates will be presented with several follow-up questions they may wish to ask or actions they may choose to take based on the information presented. Candidates will have to choose between two options to successfully resolve the situation. The options may be phrased in different ways depending on the scenario presented in the video. Examples include:

(a) This action is required to successfully resolve the situation.
(b) This action is NOT required to successfully resolve the situation.

-or-

(a) This is an essential action to take to properly conclude the incident.
(b) This is NOT an essential action to take to properly conclude the incident.

Questions in both the multiple-choice and video-based portions will be preceded by directions which will instruct candidates on how they should answer each type of question. Responses to multiple-choice and two-option test formats within the video-based portion of the exam must be marked on the answer sheet. This is done by completely filling in the appropriate space on the

This material is the property of the NJ Civil Service Commission (CSC). Material should not be altered, duplicated, or used for training purposes without expressed permission from the NJ CSC.

answer sheet which designates the letter that corresponds to their answer choice. No credit will be awarded for any answer that is not properly marked on the answer sheet. Candidates are encouraged to read each set of instructions carefully as they progress through the exam.

D. Potential Source Material

While preparing for the exam, candidates may find it helpful to consult the following sources of information:

Constitution of the United States and Amendments
Past and Current United States and New Jersey Court Decisions (Case Law)
N.J.S.A. Title 2C - The N.J. Code of Criminal Justice
N.J.S.A. Title 39 - Motor Vehicles and Traffic Regulation
New Jersey Attorney General Guidelines/Directives*

* Please note that the N.J. Office of the Attorney General has recently created a new set of websites where Guidelines (https://www.njoag.gov/resources/ag-guidelines/) and Directives (https://www.njoag.gov/resources/ag-directives/) can be found. When preparing for the exam, it is the candidates' responsibility to ensure that they identify, access, and are familiar with the most up-to-date version of all Guidelines and Directives that are currently in effect.

In addition to the topic areas listed above, candidates may also be assessed in areas such as the ability to complete reports and recognize content errors in written reports, ability to express information clearly and accurately in written narrative form, ability to read and interpret rules and statutes/codes, as well as problem solving, decision making and other related areas. Assessment of these ability areas may require candidates to read, review, and answer questions related to fictitious reports and policies created specifically for this exam. Please note that the development of test items IS NOT limited to the sources provided in this orientation guide. Candidates are encouraged to consult additional source material they feel will aid them in their preparation for the Police Sergeant exam.

NOTE: Candidates are encouraged to routinely check the CSC website for additional information or more specific details if they become necessary.

IV. EXAM ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

Due to the inclusion of a video portion, some logistical adjustments are necessary for the administration of the 2027 Police Sergeant promotional exam. The CSC is currently determining which test facilities will be best suited for this type of administration. It is the CSC's intention to test both the video and multiple-choice portions of the exam during the same administration. The size of the candidate population and the availability of testing facilities will determine if the exam will be held during a weeknight or on a Saturday with candidates being scheduled for one of two sessions. As indicated previously in the Date and Location section, candidates will be notified of their specific test location two to three weeks prior to the test date.

It is the CSC's intention to give all candidates accurate information about the 2027 Police Sergeant promotional exam as soon as it becomes available. With this in mind, candidates are encouraged to periodically check the Law Enforcement Status Report on the CSC website (https://nj.gov/csc/jobs/publicsafety/law_titles.shtml), and this orientation guide, for updated information.

This material is the property of the NJ Civil Service Commission (CSC). Material should not be altered, duplicated, or used for training purposes without expressed permission from the NJ CSC.

A. Late Policy

Candidates should plan their route to the test center in advance of the test date as soon as the test location is made available. Candidates are encouraged to arrive early, since candidates arriving late will NOT be admitted to the exam.

B. Test Administration Logistics

If the exam is administered in two separate sessions on a Saturday. The first session will be scheduled during the morning, with the second session in the early afternoon. A period of sequestration will be required for candidates in the first session. Candidates in the first session must remain at the exam center until all candidates for the second session have arrived. Therefore, candidates in the first session who finish the exam early may not leave the test center until the exam monitor instructs them to do so. This measure is necessary to safeguard test security, by eliminating the potential for test content to be discussed between candidates who have already taken the exam and those who have not. Due to the importance of test security, no exceptions to the sequestration policy will be made for any candidate. This advance notice is being provided so that candidates may plan accordingly. Candidates with medical/dietary concerns must provide for their own needs. Please note that candidates scheduled for the second session may leave the test center once they complete the exam, if they finish before time is up.

C. Test Time

If there is a need for the sequestration of the candidates scheduled for the morning session, these candidates should expect to spend several hours at the testing center. Candidates scheduled for the afternoon session may leave as soon as they finish their exam. Candidates will be notified of their individual report time approximately two to three weeks prior to the exam.

V. POST-EXAM INFORMATION

A. Explanation of Scoring Process

Written Exam Portion

The scoring of the multiple-choice portion of the exam will be based on the number of correct responses. Therefore, it is in the candidate's best interest to answer all questions. If the answer to a question is not known, choose the BEST option. Prior to starting the exam, candidates will be informed as to the total number of items to answer and the total time allotted to complete the test. Candidates should budget their time so that they can respond to all questions within the allotted time.

Video-Based Portion

The scoring of the video portion of the exam will be based on the number of correct responses. Therefore, it is in the candidate's best interest to answer all questions. For each question, candidates will be instructed as to whether they should choose the one BEST answer from the options provided or, in the case of two-option items, whether the statement provided is required/not required or essential/not essential to successfully resolve the scenario.

This material is the property of the NJ Civil Service Commission (CSC). Material should not be altered, duplicated, or used for training purposes without expressed permission from the NJ CSC.

Both the multiple-choice and video-based portions of the exam will be scored electronically. Using a No. 2 pencil, candidates should blacken selected answers firmly, neatly, and completely. Candidates should mark only one answer for each question, while making sure to erase cleanly any answer changes. Stray marks should be avoided.

B. Review and Appeal Information

Before the exam begins, candidates will be given a review form that explains the specific dates and times that will be made available to review the exam. Appointments are made on a first-come, first-served basis, until all appointments are booked. Candidates will be permitted to leave the test center with the review form so they can reference the information contained on it, if they choose to schedule a review of the exam.

Any objection to the manner in which the exam was administered must be made in writing immediately following the completion of the exam, by completing a Test Administration Comment/ Appeal Form prior to leaving the exam center. This form can be obtained from the Center Supervisor. No appeal relating to the manner in which the exam was administered shall be permitted after the test date.

Candidates should be aware that all appeals pertaining to test administration and/or test content are subject to a $20 processing fee, paid by check or money order to NJCSC. Persons who have veteran status are exempt from this fee.

C. Explanation of Seniority

A candidate's final score (and rank) on a CSC police promotional list consists of two weighted parts: the test score and the seniority score.

The seniority score combines two elements. The first, length of service, is the time from the regular appointment date (of the eligible title) to the closing date of the announcement, minus the time spent on suspensions, layoffs, and regular leaves of absence without pay (not including military, educational, gubernatorial appointments, personal sick, disability, family, voluntary furlough, furlough extensions, and to fill elective office) on a day-for-day deduction. The second element, record of service, adds a maximum of ten points to the seniority score. The ten points are reduced by disciplinary suspensions up to five years from the closing date.

For Police Sergeant promotional exams, seniority is weighted at 20% and test score is weighted at 80%. Seniority is combined with the test score to produce the final average score.

This material is the property of the NJ Civil Service Commission (CSC). Material should not be altered, duplicated, or used for training purposes without expressed permission from the NJ CSC.

D. Calculation of Seniority Score

To a base score of 70.000, one point is added for each year of eligible service up to a maximum of 15. The maximum score for the length of service component is 85.000.

Ten additional points are given for record of service. The record of service component is reduced by disciplinary suspensions occurring within five years of the closing date, by the following rules:

.0025 times the number of days suspended, up to three years from the closing date, and
.00125 times the number of days suspended, from 3 years to 5 years from the closing date.

The maximum possible seniority score is 95.000.

E. Explanation of Exam Results and Promotions

The results from this exam will be available after the receipt, review, and disposition of all exam appeals. This process generally takes a minimum of 12 weeks following the last test review date. Candidates should NOT call the CSC for their scores. Candidates will receive their exam results in the mail. Eligible lists will also be available on the CSC website.

After the exam is scored, candidates will be ranked within their particular jurisdiction according to their final score (a composite of test score and seniority score). Promotions to the level of Police Sergeant are made from a certified list based upon this ranking. Please Note: Promotional appointees are considered to be serving conditionally, pending resolution of all scoring appeals related to the exam.

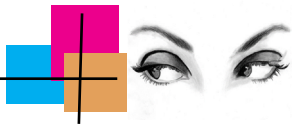
This material is the property of the NJ Civil Service Commission (CSC). Material should not be altered, duplicated, or used for training purposes without expressed permission from the NJ CSC.

VI. STUDY TIPS

A. Descriptions and Study Tips for Different Learning Styles

Research suggests that not all people learn the same way. With so much information available in the source material, it may help you to consider which learning style best matches your abilities, so you can determine the most effective way for you to study the material. While this is not an exhaustive description of the different learning styles, consider the following information as one possible way to determine which study method is best for you.

1. The Visual Learning Style



Description

You learn best when information is presented visually and in a written language format. In a classroom setting, you benefit from instructors who use the blackboard (or projector screen) to list the essential points of a lecture, or who provide you with an outline to follow along with during lecture. You benefit from information obtained from textbooks and class notes. You tend to like to study by yourself in a quiet room. You often see information "in your mind's eye" when you are trying to remember something.

Study Tips

- Find a quiet place to study, away from noise and visual distractions.
- Preview the study material by looking at the table of contents, headings, and pictures before starting to read.
- Write symbols or key words in the margins of your textbook or manual.
- Use highlighters in different colors to emphasize and organize important concepts.
- Write down key points and details that you want to remember.
- When given information in charts, write out explanations in your own words.
- Organize your notes in outline format, including main headings or categories and notes below each. As an alternative, you can organize your notes by using charts, graphs, pictures, or diagrams.
- Make flashcards of important points and key terms. Limit the amount of information placed on each card.
- Visualize key concepts in your head.

2. The Auditory Learning Style

Description

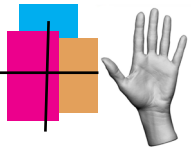
You learn best when information is auditory (presented in an oral language format). In a classroom setting, you benefit from listening to lectures and participating in group discussions. You also benefit from obtaining information from audio tape. When trying to remember something, you can often "hear" the way someone told you the information, or the way you previously repeated it out loud. You learn best when interacting with others in a listening/speaking exchange.

Study Tips

- Before reading, look through headings and pictures and say out loud what you think each section may cover.
- While reading your notes or textbook, read out loud whenever possible.
- Take pauses while reading to summarize aloud what you have read.
- Record yourself reading your notes or textbook, then play it back and listen to it repeatedly, or listen to audiobooks.
- Study in a group or with a friend. Discuss the material.
- Make up flashcards and read the material out loud as you memorize it.
- Ask a friend to help quiz you on test material.

This material is the property of the NJ Civil Service Commission (CSC). Material should not be altered, duplicated, or used for training purposes without expressed permission from the NJ CSC.

3. The Tactile-Kinesthetic Learning Style



Description

You learn best when physically engaged in a “hands-on” activity. In the classroom, you benefit from a lab setting where you can manipulate materials to learn new information. You learn best when you can be physically active in the learning environment. You benefit from instructors who encourage in-class demonstrations, “hands-on” student learning experiences, and field work outside the classroom.

Study Tips

- Before reading, look over the table of contents, headings, etc., to get a feel for the book or manual.
- Write notes, draw pictures, or make charts as you are reading or listening to study material.
- Take short (3-5 minute) breaks during your study time.
- Walk around while reading or memorizing information.
- Move while learning (e.g., tap a pen, squeeze a “stress relief” object, swing an arm, kick a leg).
- Listen to audio recordings of study material while working out.
- Type notes on the computer. Incorporate tables and graphics as needed.
- Consider studying in a lounge chair rather than at a desk.
- Consider playing background music (baroque) while trying to learn new material.
- Consider reading material through colored transparencies in order to help with focus.
- While reading, point to or trace the words as you go along.
- Paraphrase the material being learned.
- When possible/appropriate, act out what is being learned. If this is not possible, visualize the concept in your mind.
- Find real-life examples of concepts being learned.
- Write important information several times to help with memory.

Sources:

Barsch, J. (1991). Barsch Inventory.
http://faculty.valenciacollege.edu/koverhiser/Learningstyles.htm

Berghuis, A.J. (2001). Abiator Online Education.

Jester, C., Miller, S. (2000). DVC Online Learning Styles Survey.

Lazear, D. Eight Ways of Teaching.

Littlefield, J. (2010). Smart Study Strategies.

Lynch, M. (2003). Learning Style Survey.

This material is the property of the NJ Civil Service Commission (CSC). Material should not be altered, duplicated, or used for training purposes without expressed permission from the NJ CSC.

B. Understanding and Reducing Test Anxiety

Police officers face a level of stress on a daily basis that is unlike almost any other career. However, most officers would prefer to deal with the stress involved in responding to a call for service than to deal with the anxiety caused by sitting for an exam that impacts their chances of being promoted. This portion of the Police Sergeant orientation guide attempts to assist candidates in recognizing some of the causes of test anxiety and provides strategies on how to reduce it. Test anxiety is a condition in which a person experiences worry or distress before, during, or after a test or other assessment, to such an extent that it causes poor performance or interferes with normal learning. Because of its effect on performance, it is important that candidates recognize the potential symptoms of test anxiety and take steps to reduce it.

It is normal for any candidate taking an exam to feel a certain degree of nervousness. However, true test anxiety can be a serious threat to a candidate's preparation and performance on the exam. Test anxiety can manifest itself in psychological ways such as "blanking," having difficulty concentrating, and experiencing negative thoughts, as well as physical ways, such as nausea, headache, sweating, and muscle tension. Candidates can attempt to reduce the effects of test anxiety and increase their chances of maximizing their performance on the exam by focusing on three steps: be prepared, get organized, and practice.

1. Be Prepared

Preparation begins with recognizing and confronting negative thoughts you may have about your past exam performance and your chances for scoring well on the upcoming Police Sergeant exams. Negative thoughts can influence your preparation for the exam by affecting your study habits, breaking your concentration, and causing you to second-guess your abilities. One strategy to reduce these thoughts is to take out a sheet of paper and create two columns. On the left side of the paper, you will honestly assess your attitudes and write down every negative thought you have about the prospects of taking a written exam. Next, on the right side of the paper, you will write a positive thought that counteracts the negative thought. For example:

Negative Thought	Positive Thought
I always do poorly on tests.	I will be more prepared than I have been in the past.
If I don't pass this test, I'm a failure.	I'm going to pass, but if I don't, I can still bounce back.
I can't possibly know everything that will be on the exam.	I know the area where my knowledge is strong and I will focus on the area in which I am unfamiliar.

Honestly assessing your feelings and concerns will help you begin to change your attitudes and create a positive mindset.

Another strategy to prepare for the exam is to gather as much information about the exam as possible. Consulting the Police Sergeant job specification (https://info.csc.nj.gov/jobspec/02739.htm) and reading over this orientation guide thoroughly will help you familiarize yourself with all aspects of the exam. Information provided in this guide will tell you, in general, what topics will be covered and what resources you can use to learn about the topics. This is a vital step in preparation for the exam, because knowing the extent of information covered by the exam will assist you in organizing a study plan.

This material is the property of the NJ Civil Service Commission (CSC). Material should not be altered, duplicated, or used for training purposes without expressed permission from the NJ CSC.

2. Get Organized

Being organized in your study habits is the next step in reducing test anxiety and increasing your performance on the exam. After you have determined from the information available to you, the topics to be covered on the exam, you need to honestly assess in which areas you are strong and which areas require more attention. You may find it helpful to create a study plan or schedule that defines what you will need to study, what resources you will need to compile, and the amount of time you will spend on each topic. When creating a study plan, you must remember to make it realistic for your current lifestyle. Candidates with responsibilities, such as family obligations, cannot expect to spend all their off-duty hours studying. Candidates should also make an attempt to avoid changing their normal routine in order to focus all their energy solely on studying. Although you may find that you need to make some sacrifices in order to put in the proper amount of time studying, it should not be at the expense of eliminating all your other interests and obligations. Some candidates believe that if they skip meals or stay up late, they are gaining extra hours of study time. Research suggests, however, that altering your normal sleeping and eating patterns, as a result of trying to spend all your spare time studying, does not have the benefits you would expect. Physical health is as important as emotional health in reducing anxiety.

Finally, remember that studying involves more than highlighting words in a book and memorizing definitions. When establishing your study plan or schedule, your goal should be to have a full understanding of terms and concepts. You will know you have a full understanding of the information when you can define a given term in your own words and discuss why it is important. Similarly, concepts are fully understood when you are able to take two related concepts and discuss their similarities and differences.

3. Practice

The final step in reducing test anxiety is to practice. While it is not possible to replicate the conditions you will encounter during the exam administration, there are strategies that you can use to simulate the skills you will need during the exam. For instance, during a multiple-choice exam, you may be sitting at a desk for several hours working on your exam. To prepare for this, it may help to block out a similar amount of uninterrupted time while you are studying. This can help you experience what it will be like to have to focus your attention for that period of time. Using the chapter review in a text book or other resource is often another way to test your knowledge while also giving you the opportunity to practice reading and analyzing multiple-choice questions. In some cases, candidates will know others who are taking the exam. Although many people prefer to study on their own, coming together to review in a group can also be helpful. During this review, each member of the group can come with prepared questions based on the source material. This strategy has the benefit of ensuring that you are reading the material critically enough to develop questions from it, while at the same time, practicing the routine of sitting down and answering questions prepared by another person.

During the days leading up to the exam, you should focus on reviewing the material you have already studied. In order to reduce test anxiety on the day of the exam, you should make every attempt to get a good night's sleep so that you can arrive at the test center well rested. Plan to arrive early, so that you are not rushing into the test center with only minutes to spare before the exam.

This material is the property of the NJ Civil Service Commission (CSC). Material should not be altered, duplicated, or used for training purposes without expressed permission from the NJ CSC.

It is important to listen to the monitor's instructions carefully and ask questions if you are unsure of anything that has been said. Be aware of how much time you have to complete the exam and the fact that, in most cases, you will be responsible for keeping track of your own time. Remember that, unless instructed otherwise, you are permitted to write in your test booklet. As you proceed through the test, you may wish to circle key words or concepts that may be important in answering test questions, making sure to properly mark all answers on your answer sheet. Review each question carefully and select the BEST answer from the options given. Remember that anxiety is fed by a fear of the unknown. The more you do to prepare prior to the exam, the better chance you will have at performing at your highest level.

Sources:

https://www.gace.ets.org/s/pdf/gace_reducing_test_anxiety.pdf

C. Tips For Answering Multiple-Choice Questions:

Basic Tips For Answering Multiple-Choice Questions

- Try not to read too much into each question. Avoid imagining scenarios in which each option given could be true. In most cases, questions that appear to be "trick questions" are usually only tricky because they are not taken at face value. Determine the best answer using only the information supplied in the question, without making unwarranted assumptions. The correct answer is the one that works best for the situation described.
- Be sure to choose an answer that is directly related to the question being asked. Do not select an answer choice, even if it is a true or correct statement by itself, unless it specifically answers the question being asked.
- The correct answer is the choice that contains the most exact or most complete information in response to the question. Some answer choices may be correct or true in part, but less exact or less complete than the "best" choice. An answer choice that is only partially correct, partially true, or true only under certain conditions should be considered an incorrect choice.
- Do not let more difficult questions affect your attitude and steal valuable time.
- Do not linger over questions you cannot answer. If you cannot decide on an answer choice, make your best guess and move on. However, if you must guess, try to eliminate as many clearly wrong choices as you can in order to make your guess from as few alternatives as possible.

This material is the property of the NJ Civil Service Commission (CSC). Material should not be altered, duplicated, or used for training purposes without expressed permission from the NJ CSC.

D. Technical Vocabulary List

While these examinations are not intended to assess your vocabulary skills, because of the nature of the concepts covered, a certain level of familiarity with technical language is necessary. The following is a short list of some terms that may appear in the source material and exam. It may be helpful to review this list and look up any other words you are unfamiliar with when reviewing this orientation guide and the source material.

ASSERT	To state or express positively
ACCOUNTABLE	Answerable; obliged to accept responsibility
AGGRIEVED	Wronged; deprived of legal rights or claims
AMBIGUOUS	Liable to more than one interpretation; uncertain
APPELLANT	Of or relating to an appeal
APPLICABLE	Relevant; applies to
APPREHEND	To take into custody
ATTENUATED	Weakened or reduced, as in strength or value
CAUSAL	Relating to, involving, or being a cause
CIRCUMVENT	To go around; bypass
COERCION	Act of bringing about by threat of force
COLLABORATE	To work together; cooperate
COLLATERAL	Security for payment of debt
COMPEL	To force; make necessary
COMPETENT	Properly qualified
CONSECUTIVE	Following one after the other in order; without interruption
CONSTITUTES	To make up, establish formally
CONSUMATION	Act of bringing to completion
DEMEANOR	Behavior towards others
DESIGNATED	Indicated, marked, pointed out; to select for duty
DISSEMINATE	Distribute or spread information
DIVERSE	Having variety in form; unlike
ENDEAVOR	To make an effort toward a given end
EXHAUSTIVE	Comprehensive, thorough
FACILITATE	To make easier
FRAUDULENT	Deceitful
HARASS	To irritate or torment persistently
ILLICIT	Not permitted by custom or law
IMMINENT	Ready to take place; impending
IMPEDE	To interfere or slow the progress of
IMPLEMENT	To put into effect; carry out
INFECTIOUS	Capable of causing infection
INFER	To conclude from evidence

This material is the property of the NJ Civil Service Commission (CSC). Material should not be altered, duplicated, or used for training purposes without expressed permission from the NJ CSC.

INFRACTION	A violation
INITIATE	To begin
INSUBORDINATE	Disobedient
LIABLE	Legally responsible
MUTUAL	Directed and received in equal amount
NARRATIVE	A written account of events
PECUNIARY	Of or relating to money; requiring the payment of money
PRECEDE	To go before
PROHIBIT	To forbid; prevent
PROLONG	To lengthen in duration, scope, or extent
PROMULGATE	To put into effect by formal public announcement
PURSUANT	In accordance with
RANDOM	Having no specific pattern or objective
RECIDIVISM	A tendency to return to criminal habits and activities
REPRIMAND	A severe formal disapproval
REQUIRE	To demand by virtue of a law, regulation, etc.; necessary
SUBORDINATE	Placed in a lower rank; subject to the authority of a superior
SUPERSEDE	To replace; to take the place of
SURVEILLANCE	Close observation of a person or group

This material is the property of the NJ Civil Service Commission (CSC). Material should not be altered, duplicated, or used for training purposes without expressed permission from the NJ CSC.

VII. SAMPLE QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

A. Written Exam Portion

The following three questions are examples of the types of questions that will appear on the upcoming Police Sergeant exam. The exam will contain different questions, although similar in structure and content. Answering these sample items correctly does not guarantee you the same success on your exam.

For multiple-choice items, the candidate will be given a brief scenario or description of events which includes a question or a statement that the candidate must answer. Candidates must choose the **BEST** answer from the four (4) options given.

Question 1 is an example of a test question designed to measure candidates' knowledge of *N.J.S.A.* 2C

1. Mrs. Harrison has not paid her rent in three months; as a result, she was served with an eviction notice. She became enraged, and in a fit of anger, recklessly kicked and damaged the bedroom and bathroom doors. The property owner comes to the police department for the purpose of signing complaints. According to the NJ Code of Criminal Justice, which is the **MOST APPROPRIATE** advice for the property owner?

   (a) The matter is landlord-tenant and civil in nature and not within the power of the police.
   (b) He should sign a criminal complaint for criminal mischief against Mrs. Harrison.
   (c) No criminal charge can be signed, because she recklessly damaged the property without the employment of fire, explosives, or other dangerous means.
   (d) He should sign a criminal complaint for theft.

Question 2 is an example of a test question designed to measure candidates' knowledge of New Jersey Case Law

2. Must a police officer, who makes observations during a routine safety inspection of a commercial truck (tractor-trailer), which reasonably leads him to believe it houses a hidden compartment containing contraband, obtain a search warrant before searching that compartment?

   (a) Yes, once the officer has the commercial vehicle detained and has probable cause to believe it has a hidden compartment, a search warrant is required to further search that compartment.
   (b) No, a search of an area of a commercial truck that is within the scope of a proper safety inspection, may be conducted without a warrant, even though this area is concealed within a hidden compartment.
   (c) Yes, the officer's purpose in continuing the search is to obtain evidence of a crime, rather than to complete the safety inspection, and such further search requires a warrant.
   (d) No, this search falls within the automobile exception to the search warrant requirement, as the commercial vehicle is mobile and the immediate search of the suspected hidden compartment is necessary for public safety.

This material is the property of the NJ Civil Service Commission (CSC). Material should not be altered, duplicated, or used for training purposes without expressed permission from the NJ CSC.

Question 3 is an example of a test question designed to measure candidates' knowledge of the NJ Attorney General Guidelines

3. An officer under your supervision is preparing to show a photo lineup of suspects to a robbery victim and a witness. The officer asks you about the proper procedures to use in composing a photo array. According to the N.J. Attorney General Guidelines for Preparing and Conducting Out-Of-Court Eyewitness Identifications, which is a TRUE statement?

   (a) Fillers should have distinctive physical characteristics which differentiate them from the suspect.
   (b) A minimum of four fillers are required per identification procedure.
   (c) When showing a new suspect to the same witness, avoid reusing fillers in lineups.
   (d) When there is more than one witness, consider placing the suspect in the same position in each lineup.

ANSWERS TO THE SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Question #1 – Key is B

NJ Title 2C questions will generally begin with a scenario that describes the elements of a crime or a detailed situation or interaction between two or more parties. Candidates will have to consider all the details presented in the scenario and answer the question based on the statutes presented in NJ Title 2C. Questions may require the candidates to determine if a statute in *N.J.S.A.* 2C was violated, the reason or main cause of the violation, and in some cases, choose which charge is most appropriate.

In this question, candidates need to consider the details given in the scenario to make the **MOST APPROPRIATE** choice from the options given. The candidate must consider the relationship (landlord/tenant) of the two parties involved, the damage caused by Mrs. Harrison, and the manner in which the damage was done.

Option (a) is incorrect because, regardless of the relationship between the two parties involved, tangible property owned by the landlord was damaged which makes this a criminal case.

Option (c) is incorrect because the use of "fire, explosives, or other dangerous means" is not required in order for Mrs. Harrison's actions to be considered criminal.

Option (d) is incorrect because the details in this scenario do not meet the elements required for a charge of Theft.

Given the flaws in the other options, option (b) is the **MOST APPROPRIATE** answer from the choices provided. According to *N.J.S.A.* 2C:17.3 Criminal Mischief, an individual is guilty of criminal mischief if he/she: (2) Purposely, knowingly, or recklessly tampers with tangible property of another so as to endanger person or property, including the damaging or destroying of a rental premises by a tenant in retaliation for institution of eviction proceedings.

This material is the property of the NJ Civil Service Commission (CSC). Material should not be altered, duplicated, or used for training purposes without expressed permission from the NJ CSC.

Question #2 – Key is B

Case law items will generally present candidates with a scenario that includes many of the same elements of a case previously decided in NJ or Federal courts. The court case may not be specifically cited and some of the names and circumstances may be altered. In most circumstances, the question will ask if the law enforcement officers' actions are appropriate given the circumstances presented in the scenario, or what offenses were committed based on the details in the scenario.

The details of this question are adapted from the following case:

STATE OF NEW JERSEY v. HEWITT
Superior Court, Appellate Division
400 ***N.J.Super.*** 376 (App. Div. 2008)

An overview and justification for the key is as follows:

A search of an area of a commercial truck that is within the scope of a proper safety inspection may be conducted without a warrant even though this area is concealed within a hidden compartment and the officer's purpose in continuing the search is to obtain evidence of a crime rather than to complete the safety inspection. ***Id.*** at 380.

In early November, Trooper Hancock, a member of the State Police Commercial Carrier Safety Inspection Unit, stopped a tractor-trailer on the New Jersey Turnpike in Mount Laurel Township to conduct a safety inspection. Defendant Anthony Hewitt was driving the tractor and co-defendant Dervan Facey was in the back in a sleeper.

When Hancock approached the truck, he noticed that Hewitt's hands were visibly shaking and that he appeared nervous. Hancock examined Hewitt's driver's license and the paperwork for the truck and then directed Hewitt to drive to a nearby rest area in order to conduct a North American Standard Level II safety inspection. A police officer conducting such an inspection may examine not only the paperwork for the truck but also make a visual inspection of the truck to check for any safety violations and of the trucks contents to ensure that they are properly secured. ***Id.*** at 380-81.

After escorting Hewitt to the rest area, Hancock was joined by two other troopers. A preliminary visual inspection of the truck revealed a number of violations, including a tail light and brake light out on the back of the trailer and an unsecured fire extinguisher. When Trooper Hancock opened the back door of the trailer to inspect its contents, he found a load jack not in the proper position. Also, three of the pallets on which crates of melons had been placed were tipped over against the side of the trailer. The trooper then crawled over the top of the crates to the front of the trailer. As he did so, he noticed that the floor ribs that run from the back to the front of the trailer continued underneath the front wall of the trailer rather than, as in most trailers, stopping before the wall. In addition, Hancock observed what appeared to be new panels secured by new rivets and caulk at the front of the trailer. Based on his training and experience, Hancock concluded that there was probably a hidden compartment at the front of the trailer. ***Id.*** at 382.

To confirm the existence of the hidden compartment, the troopers measured the inside and outside of the trailer and discovered a four-foot discrepancy. One of the troopers also used a density meter, which indicated a significant difference between the density of the contents in the front four feet and the rest of the trailer.

This material is the property of the NJ Civil Service Commission (CSC). Material should not be altered, duplicated, or used for training purposes without expressed permission from the NJ CSC.

In their decision, the court stated that the constitutionality of the search of a search and seizure is determined by whether a law enforcement officer's actions were "objectively reasonable, without regard to his or her underlying motives or intent." A properly authorized administrative search is not unconstitutional simply because the officer conducting the search has reason to believe that the search may reveal evidence of a crime. Therefore even if an officer had suspected, when he began his safety inspection, that the trailer was being used to transport contraband, and his real purpose was to find that contraband, this underlying motive would not have made the administrative search unconstitutional. For this reason, the **BEST** answer for this question is (b).

Question #3 – Key is C

Attorney General Guidelines (AGG) questions may cover all guidelines and directives issued by the Attorney General's (AG's) Office. Similar to NJ Title 2C items, AGG items may include a scenario or description of events. Candidates should consider all the details presented and answer each question based on the appropriate AGG or directive.

This question refers specifically to the N.J. Attorney General Guidelines for Preparing and Conducting Out-Of-Court Eyewitness Identifications. Candidates are asked to consider all the details provided in the scenario and choose the one TRUE statement as the correct answer.

Option (a) is incorrect because the guideline specifically states that in composing a photo array, the administrator or investigator should select fillers who generally fit the witness's description of the perpetrator and when there is a limited or inadequate description of the perpetrator provided by the witness, or when the description of the perpetrator differs significantly from the appearance of the suspect, fillers should resemble the suspect in significant features, such as gender, race, skin color, facial hair, age, and distinctive physical characteristics.

Option (b) is incorrect because the guideline specifically requires that in composing a photo array, the administrator or investigator should include a minimum of five fillers per identification procedure.

Option (c) is correct because the guideline specifically states that when showing a new suspect to the same witness, you should avoid reusing fillers in lineups. Because this is the only TRUE statement of the options given, option (c) is the correct answer.

Option (d) is incorrect because the guideline specifically states that when there is more than one witness, you should consider placing the suspect in different positions in each lineup.

B. Video-Based Portion

For the video-based portion of the exam, candidates will observe an event, or series of events, unfold on a video monitor. Candidates will be permitted to take notes on the actions appearing on the monitor, and use those notes to answer the questions that follow. A video may be divided into several short segments, with new information being presented as the events unfold. Where necessary, background information will precede each video segment before the actions begin. This information will be provided in the form of a voice-over segment, spoken by a narrator, along with bulleted information containing relevant background information appearing on the video monitor.

This material is the property of the NJ Civil Service Commission (CSC). Material should not be altered, duplicated, or used for training purposes without expressed permission from the NJ CSC.

The video-based portion of the exam may include several different video scenarios covering both technical and non-technical knowledge areas. Candidates will assume the role of a Police Sergeant as individuals portraying roles in the video speak directly to the camera.

Candidates will answer questions as if they are involved in the event or conversation that is unfolding on the monitor.

The following section is a narrative description of how a scenario in the video-based portion of the exam may unfold. The questions that follow are examples of the different formats candidates may see in the video-based portion of the exam. The content of the narrative description of the video scenario provided below and example questions are intended to be generic and are shown here for illustrative purposes only. Questions on the actual exam will be based on the information presented in the real video format.

Video Scenario – Officer Disagreement

(The video begins with the narrator speaking along with the following information, in bullet-point format, on the video monitor)

Narrator: You are a Sergeant at a medium-sized department. Two of your officers have submitted vacation requests for the same time period. You are concerned that this could leave your shift understaffed. They have equal seniority. You have called them in to your office to discuss the situation.

(The scene begins with both officers seated at your desk as one of them begins speaking)

Officer Bell: I need this time off. I have family coming in from out of town and I can't cancel on them now.

Officer Foot: No way! I take this week off every year. Everyone knows I go hunting the same week every season. This has never been a problem before. I booked this trip months in advance... I shouldn't have to cancel my plans just so your family isn't inconvenienced.

Officer Bell: So you get this week off every year just because you like to go hunting? How is that fair? Just move it back a week. I don't understand why you're making this so difficult.

(The scene ends with the narrator speaking and the instructions and a question appearing on the monitor)

This material is the property of the NJ Civil Service Commission (CSC). Material should not be altered, duplicated, or used for training purposes without expressed permission from the NJ CSC.

The following is an example of a video-based test question using the multiple-choice format:

DIRECTIONS: Use the information contained in the video scenario, as well as the notes you may have taken, to choose the one **BEST** answer for the following question:

1. In this scenario, the **BEST** way to deal with these two officers is to

   (a) deny both vacation requests.
   (b) grant both vacation requests and pull an officer from another squad as a temporary replacement.
   (c) consult department policies regarding leave requests and staffing plans before making your decision.
   (d) let the officers know you will speak with your supervisor and then let them know of your decision.

Question #1 – Key is C

In this type of question, the directions indicate that you are to consider the details given in the scenario to choose the one BEST action from the options given. In this case, consulting your department policies before making your decision provides you with a justification for your decision. This action also indicates that you will make a decision based on policy and not an arbitrary reason, which is more likely to lead to the officers accepting the decision.

The following is an example of a video-based test question using the two-option format:

DIRECTIONS: Use the information provided in the video scenario, and the notes you may have taken, to consider each potential action to be taken. For each statement, choose if the action is required or not required to successfully resolve the situation.

1. Deny both vacation requests and dismiss the officers from your office.

   (a) This action is required to successfully resolve this situation.
   (b) This action is not required to successfully resolve this situation.

2. Ask your supervisor about how you should proceed before making a decision.

   (a) This action is required to successfully resolve this situation.
   (b) This action is not required to successfully resolve this situation.

3. Consult department policies that could instruct you on how to proceed.

   (a) This action is required to successfully resolve this situation.
   (b) This action is not required to successfully resolve this situation.

This material is the property of the NJ Civil Service Commission (CSC). Material should not be altered, duplicated, or used for training purposes without expressed permission from the NJ CSC.

Question #1 – Key is B

In this type of question, the directions indicate that you are to consider the details given in the scenario, and consider each action separately, as you determine if the action presented is required or not required to successfully resolve the situation. In this case, denying both requests would only upset both officers and potentially cause more problems.

Question #2 – Key is B

In this type of question, the directions indicate that you are to consider the details given in the scenario, and consider each action separately, as you determine if the action presented is required or not required to successfully resolve the situation. In this case, it is not necessary to rely on your supervisor before making every decision. The officers have come to you, their supervisor, for resolution. Making a decision in this instance is your responsibility.

Questions #3 – Key is A

In this type of question, the directions indicate that you are to consider the details given in the scenario, and consider each action separately, as you determine if the action presented is required or not required to successfully resolve the situation. In this case, consulting with department policies to guide your decision shows the officers you are taking the issue seriously and are not making a decision based on favoritism or other arbitrary reasons. Consulting relevant policies will assist you in making an informed decision, which will help to resolve the situation. For this question, you should choose option (a) because the action is required.

VIII. CONCLUSION

This orientation guide was designed to help familiarize candidates with aspects of the Police Sergeant exam, as well as provide some suggestions for preparation. The suggestions provided here are not exhaustive; we encourage candidates to engage in whatever additional preparation strategies they believe will enhance their chances of performing effectively on the exam. Candidates should also continue to monitor the CSC website for additional information or updates if they become necessary. We hope that this orientation guide has been helpful to you. GOOD LUCK!

This material is the property of the NJ Civil Service Commission (CSC). Material should not be altered, duplicated, or used for training purposes without expressed permission from the NJ CSC.