THE CITY OF
COLUMBUS
ANDREW J. GINTHER, MAYOR
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

Police Officer
Writing Sample

Preparation Guide

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You're not preparing for a job

You're preparing for a career!

Introduction

The Columbus Civil Service Commission (CSC) designed this guide to assist you as you prepare to do your best on the *Columbus Police Officer Multiple-Choice Exam*. The Columbus Police Officer exam consist of three phases: Multiple-Choice (MC) Exam, Writing Sample (WS), and Situational Response Assessment (SRA). CSC created preparation guides designed for each phase of the exam. These three exam phases combine as the second step in the overall *Journey to Becoming a City of Columbus Police Officer*.

The *Journey to a City of Columbus Police Officer* is summarized on page 5. The remainder of this guide focuses on the Police Officer Writing Sample. You will find explanations of the MC test phase, sample materials, detailed guidance regarding the right or best response, preparation advice and performance strategies, and what to expect on test day.

When used to the fullest extent, this prep guide will prepare you for the Police Officer exam. For optimal test results, read this guide thoroughly, and use the featured sample materials as recommended.

The Columbus Police Officer Exam consists of the following phases:

I. Multiple-Choice Exam (MC)
II. Writing Sample Exam (WS)
III. Situational Response Assessment (SRA)

The MC and WS are graded on a *pass* or *fail* basis. If you pass the MC and WS, and complete the SRA, only your SRA score (which may include earned points) determines your final Police Officer Test score. Additionally, qualifying veterans' preference points are added to the scores of those who pass all three phases of the Police Officer Test.

Additional Materials and Information

For additional information regarding this guide or about the Police Officer selection process in general contact the Columbus Civil Service Commission Police Officer testing unit.

City of Columbus Civil Service Commission
Police Officer Test Team
Location: 1111 E. Broad Street
Phone: (614) 645-0800
Email: policefiretesting@columbus.gov
Website: https://www.columbus.gov/civilservice/uniformed-police-series/Police-Officer/

Questions about what it's like to be a Columbus Police Officer, pay, salary, benefits, or for an opportunity to conduct a ride-along with a Columbus Police Officer contact the Police Recruiting Unit.

City of Columbus Police Recruiting Unit
Location: 1120 Morse Road
Phone: (614) 645-4642
Email: jobs@columbuspolice.org
Website: www.columbus.gov/police-recruitment/

The Journey to Becoming a Columbus Police Officer

Complete the following milestones to become a City of Columbus Police Officer.

1. Application

- ✓ Apply to take the Police Officer with the City of Columbus.
- ✓ Meet the minimum qualifications and pass the abbreviated background review.

2. Police Officer Test   *Today's Session*

- ✓ Take and pass all three entry-level Police Officer exam phases: 1) Multiple-Choice, 2) Writing Sample, 3) Situational Response Assessment.
- ✓ Submit your Personal History Summary (PHS) and relevant documents.

3. Eligible List

- ✓ Take and meet Ohio Peace Officer Training Commission (OPOTC) entry physical fitness benchmarks.
- ✓ Participate in a Job Interview.
- ✓ Pass the background standards review: Pre-Employment Investigation, review of the PHS, criminal and court records, and other documentation.
- ✓ Participate in polygraph examination.
- ✓ Civil Service reviews background packet.

4. Referral List

- ✓ Chain of command reviews full packet.
- ✓ The Columbus Public Safety Director selects who receives a conditional offer of employment.

5. Conditional Offer

- ✓ Take and meet the standards for the medical exams, which consists of a medical exam and stress test.
- ✓ Take the psychological assessments and psychological interview. Pass the psychological exam.

6. Final Offer

- ✓ Complete the hiring paperwork and start the Columbus Police Academy.

7. Training Academy

- ✓ Complete Columbus Police Academy and meet all OPOTC & Columbus Division of Police (CPD) training standards.
- ✓ Pass OPOTC exit exam and meet OPOTC final physical fitness benchmarks.

8. Sworn In

- ✓ Swear in as a Law Enforcement Officer in the State of Ohio.
- ✓ Participate in field training and complete the one-year probationary period.

Phase II: Writing Sample Test (WS)

Overview

Purpose. The Writing Sample (WS) is designed to assess knowledge, skills, and abilities in the area of written expression. Police officers routinely document information collected through visual and verbal communication. The WS exam tests your ability to gather such information and communicate it in written form.
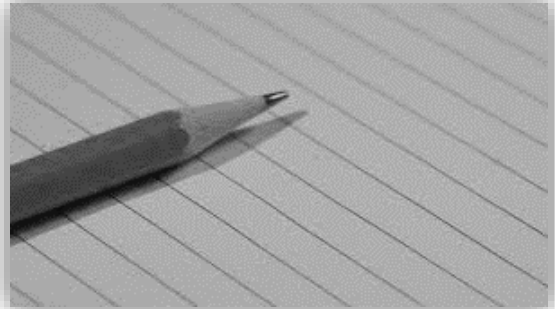
Content. The WS test consists of a single video-based scenario. The scenario involves an officer on the scene of an incident, collecting information for an incident report from one or more witnesses.

The WS test will involve just one incident; that incident will be revealed on test day. The five types of incidents that could be featured on test day include *assault, hit and run motor vehicle, missing person, property destruction,* and *shoplifting.*

Test day. On test day, you will receive an incident handout, an incident report test booklet, scrap paper, pencils, and a pen. Then you will watch an incident video; once the video is shown, you will have one hour to complete the incident report test booklet.

Scoring. Your response will be written in a test booklet, and scored by trained graders.

The remainder of this guide's Phase II section contains the following sub-sections:

    A. Content & Features
    B. Scoring Dimensions
    C. Key to Success
    D. Study Materials

A. Content & Features

On Test Day

On test day you will be seated at your own table. You will be provided 1) one incident handout, 2) one incident report test booklet, and 3) scrap paper, pencils, and a pen.

First you will view an *incident video* and take notes. Once the video ends you will complete the *incident report test booklet*. You will be permitted to refer to the *incident handout* while watching the video, and while completing the incident report.

You will have one hour to complete the incident report test booklet.

Incident Video

A sample incident video is posted to the CSC website. A visual snapshot of an early scene in the sample incident video is provided below for illustration purposes.

The incident video will portray a simulated interview with a caller or witness, conducted by a Columbus Police Officer. The video will portray the officer gathering information from the caller or witness for an incident report.

During the *actual* test incident video, the video narrator will describe *you* as the second officer on scene, responsible for writing the Incident Report.

Your task while watching the video will be to write down any details that are being provided by the witness(es) shown on screen.

Incident Handout

A visual snapshot of the incident handout is provided below for illustration purposes. A full-sized sample incident handout is in the *Study Materials* section.

The incident handout contains the following sections:

1. Incident type
2. Scenario Summary
3. Relevant Information

Additional information about the sections is provided on pages 9 through 12.

SAMPLE Incident Handout

Incident Type

Incident Type →

Missing Person

Scenario Summary

Scenario Summary →

You are a police officer with the Columbus Division of Police. Your name is Officer Jordan Sanders, badge # 214, precinct assignment 5B6. You are working in cruiser #50. You and your partner were dispatched on October 31st to a private residence at 3146 Mayfair Drive, Columbus, OH 43221 to handle a report of a missing person. The caller is Mary Russell. You were dispatched at 6:00 p.m. and you arrive at 6:11 p.m.

The scenes you are about to view will show your partner, Officer Steven Potter, interviewing the caller and a family member. Officer Potter's badge # is 324. You are to complete an incident report form and write a descriptive passage detailing the facts as presented in the scenes and narrative. Your incident number for this run is 143. Assume that the incident happened in the current year.

Relevant Information

Relevant Information →

A Missing Person Report is filed when a person is not where they are expected to be, and their absence may have been involuntary or there is the possibility of danger.

- Incident information (incident #, badge #'s, assignment #, car #, date and time of dispatch, location)
- Relevant information for caller and witness/family member, if known (name, address, phone numbers, date of birth, social security number)
- Caller's relation to missing person
- Location where missing person was last seen
- Missing person's place of employment or schooling
- Date and time where missing person was last seen or range of time, if exact is not available
- Sequence of events
- Description of missing person (name, address, phone number, date of birth, social security number, sex, race, age, height, weight, hair and eye color, and clothing)
- Does missing person normally stay in contact with parties involved?
- Include any instructions given by police personnel to all parties involved

Scenario Summary Section

The Scenario Summary section provides specific details regarding the actual incident being reported in the incident video. Since some specific details will be provided to you on test day, you **should** refer to this information during your response period. Below is an example of what you might find in the Scenario Summary section if the incident concerned a Missing Person—a full sample of a *Missing Person* incident is provided in the *Study Materials* section.

You are a police officer with the Columbus Division of Police. Your name is Officer Jordan Sanders, badge # 214, precinct assignment 5B6. You are working in cruiser #50. You and your partner were dispatched on October 31st to a private residence at 3146 Mayfair Drive, Columbus, OH 43221 to handle a report of a missing person. The caller is Mary Russell. You were dispatched at 6:00 p.m. and you arrive at 6:11 p.m.

The scenes you are about to view will show your partner, Officer Steven Potter, interviewing the caller and a family member. Officer Potter's badge # is 324. You are to complete an incident report form and write a descriptive passage detailing the facts as presented in the scenes and narrative. Your incident number for this run is 143. Assume that the incident happened in the current year.

Relevant Information Section

This section presents the specific information that needs to be included in the incident report. On test day, the Incident Handout will include a Relevant Information section. The content of the Relevant Information section will depend on the type of incident being featured in the video. Familiarizing yourself with this information before test day will help you know what to listen for and note during the video may help you perform better on the Writing Sample.

The five types of incidents that could be featured in the incident video are:

- Assault
- Hit and Run Motor Vehicle
- Missing Person
- Property Destruction
- Shoplifting

Pages 10 through 12 you will find the content of the Relevant Information section on the test-day Incident Handout for each type of incident that could be featured on the day of your test.

"Assault" Relevant Information Section

An Assault Incident Report is filed when someone causes or attempts to cause physical harm to another person.

- Incident information (incident #, badge #'s, assignment #, car #, date and time of dispatch, location)
- Relevant information for the caller, witness, and victim (name, address, phone numbers, date of birth, social security number)
- Address of occurrence
- Date and time of occurrence or range of time, if exact is not available
- Description of suspect(s) if known (name, address, phone number, gender, race, age, height, weight, hair, and eye color and, clothing, and any other physical descriptions)
- Description of physical evidence (marks or bruises, weapons, video)
- Sequence of events
- Can the caller, victim, or witness(es) identify suspect(s)?
- Instructions given by police personnel to involved parties

"Hit and Run Motor Vehicle" Relevant Information Section

A Hit and Run Motor Vehicle Incident Report is filed regarding anyone who causes an accident and leaves before help arrives; this is usually a vehicle driver who flees from the scene of an accident in which they are involved.

- Incident information (incident #, badge #'s, assignment #, car #, date and time of dispatch, location)
- Date and time of occurrence or range of time, if the exact time is not available
- Road conditions at the time of the accident
- The posted speed limits
- Relevant information for the caller, victim, and witness(es) (name, address, phone numbers, date of birth, social security number)
- License plate(s) of vehicle(s) involved in the incident
- Description(s) of the vehicle(s) involved (year, make, model, color, and license plate #)
- Description of suspect(s) (name, address, phone number, gender, race, age, height, weight, hair, and eye color and, clothing, and any other physical descriptions)
- Sequence of events
- Witness description of incident and driver of hit-skip vehicle
- Can the caller, victim, or witness(es) identify the suspect(s)?
- Instructions given by police personnel to involved parties

"Missing Person" Relevant Information Section

A Missing Person Report is filed when a person is not where they are expected to be. Their absence may have been involuntary, or there is the possibility of danger.

- Incident information (incident #, badge #'s, assignment #, car #, date and time of dispatch, location)
- Relevant information for the caller, witness, family member (name, address, phone numbers, date of birth, social security numbers)
- Caller's relation to the missing person
- Location where the missing person was last seen
- Missing person's place of employment or schooling
- Date and time where the missing person was last seen or range of time, if the exact time is not available
- Sequence of events
- Description of the missing person (name, address, phone number, date of birth, social security number, gender, race, age, height, weight, hair, and eye color, and clothing)
- Does the missing person usually stay in contact with the parties involved?
- Instructions given by police personnel to involved parties

"Property Destruction" Relevant Information

A Property Destruction Report is filed when damage to property, in any degree, results in loss of its value or interferes with its use or enjoyment. This does not include wear and tear by regular use.

- Incident information (incident #, badge #'s, assignment #, car #, date and time of dispatch, location)
- Date and time of occurrence or range of time, if exact is not available
- Known information for the victim and witness(es) (name, address, phone numbers, date of birth, social security number)
- If a vehicle is involved, the description of the vehicle (year, make, model, color, and license plate #)
- Determine if the property is insured
- Specific damage to property and value of the damage
- Sequence of events
- Information provided by the witness(es)
- Description of suspect(s) (name, address, phone number, gender, race, age, height, weight, hair, and eye color, clothing, and any other physical descriptions)
- Does the victim wish to prosecute?
- Instructions given by police personnel to involved parties

"Shoplifting" Relevant Information Section

A Shoplifting Incident Report is filed regarding any unlawful taking of property from a retail establishment.

- Incident information (incident #, badge #'s, assignment #, car #, date and time of dispatch, location)
- Address of occurrence
- Date and time of occurrence or range of time, if exact is not available
- Relevant information for caller, victim, and witness(es) if known (name, address, phone numbers, date of birth, social security number)
- Description of how suspect entered and/or exited the building (points of entry/exit and any evidence of each)
- Description of any stolen property (estimated value of stolen property including prices and serial numbers if available)
- Description of suspect(s) if known (name, address, phone number, gender, race, age, height, weight, hair and eye color, clothing, and any other physical descriptions)
- Description of any evidence at scene
- Sequence of events
- Can the caller/victim/witness(es) identify suspect(s)?
- Include any instructions given by police personnel to all parties involved

Incident Report Test Booklet

The Incident Report contains a *Form* section, and a *Narrative* section. A visual snapshot of each is below. Full-sized copies are in the *Study Materials* section.

Form Section

The Form section of the Incident Report contains four sections and several underlined blank spaces per section.

In each blank space, you are to write the specific information that was provided during the video.

If a piece of requested information is not known or was never provided in the video, **you must write "unknown" in that space to receive credit for that answer.**

Narrative Section

The Narrative section contains three lined pages. Your Narrative must be written on the lines provided across those pages. Nothing written outside those lines will be scored.

You are <u>not</u> required to fill all three pages. As shown in the Samples section, it is possible for a Narrative response to be highly effective and <u>not</u> use all three pages.

B. Scoring Dimensions

Your response will be scored in two dimensions: 1) information gathering, and 2) writing skill. Your response will be scored by trained graders.

For *information gathering*, graders will use a checklist to assess the completeness and accuracy of your report. For *writing skill*, graders will use a scale to assess your organization, spelling, grammar, word choice/usage, sentence structure, punctuation, and capitalization. Below are key questions the graders must consider as they score.

Information Gathering (relevant to the Form section)

Completeness:
- What quantity of relevant information provided in the video is in the report?
- Is the Form section complete? If the report calls for information that was never provided in the video, is the word "unknown" written in those Form fields?
- Is the Narrative section complete? Has all information relevant to the incident, yet not called for in the Form section, been included in the Narrative section?

Accuracy:
- Is each item filled in and written correctly?
- Is the information accurate and specific?

Writing Skill (relevant to the Narrative section)

Organization and Clarity:
- How well are the facts organized into a logical or meaningful order?
- Is the Narrative organized in a way that makes it easy to understand?
- Is the word choice descriptive, specific, and clear?
- Are the appropriate words used?

Writing Mechanics:
- Are sentences complete and adequately constructed?
- Are sentences punctuated appropriately (no run-on sentences, comma splices, or fragments)?
- Are words spelled correctly?
- Is correct grammar used?
- Are words in the correct tense?
- Are words capitalized correctly?

C. Key to Success

BEFORE TEST DAY:

1. **Study the five incident types explained in this guide.** CSC will provide you an Incident Handout on test day. Studying the different types before test day may help you on test day to reduce anxiety and be more attentive to key information presented during the video.

2. **Study the two WS scoring dimensions explained in this guide.** Review and familiarize yourself with each dimension so you can understand what the graders will be looking for when they grade your response.

3. **Study the list of words in the multiple-choice preparation guide.** Some of the words on that list will be highly relevant in your narrative response. The more words you know how to spell and use in context, before test day, the fewer words you will need to look up on test day while you are writing your response.

4. **Utilize the sample materials provided in this guide.** The best way to utilize the sample materials is to (1) review the *sample materials checklist*, review the *sample handout*, (2) watch the *sample video*, (3) complete the *sample incident report*, and then (4) use the *example of a passing report*, *example of a failing report*, and other information provided in this guide to assess your response.

   A checklist that covers the details involved in using the sample materials is provided in the *Study Materials* section. Use that checklist to ensure that you are making the most of the time you have to prepare for this exam.

5. **Turn your weaknesses into strengths.** Identify where you need to improve: When you watched the sample incident video, did you miss anything when you took notes? Did you lose focus during the video? Did you miss any instructions?

   Look for news and videos that feature someone explaining a past event. Listen, take notes regarding the details, and develop a summary with those details.

   Ask someone with excellent writing skills to review your response for spelling and grammar, or type your response and use an online grammar and spelling checker.

ON TEST DAY:

1. **Bring a non-electronic dictionary and/or thesaurus.** You will be permitted to refer to a non-electronic dictionary and thesaurus while you complete the incident report—but those will <u>not</u> be provided, so it is up to you to bring them to the test.

2. **While you watch the video:** Listen for answers to "who, what, when, where, why, how" questions since a good incident report will generally cover all six:

   - Who (witnesses, victims, suspects, etc.) is directly involved in the incident?
   - What happened? What instructions did the officer give the involved persons?
   - When did it happen? When did the officer (you) take the report?
   - Where did it happen? Where did the officer (you) take the report?
   - Why did it happen?
   - How did it happen?

   Note any conflicting or inconsistent information provided. If conflicting information is given, include all accounts of the incident and indicate who provided each one.

3. **While you fill out the incident report's <u>Form</u> section:**
   - Refer to the incident handout to ensure you include all necessary details.
   - Complete the entire form section neatly, accurately, and legibly. If the graders cannot read your handwriting, you will not get credit.
   - Provide an answer in each blank space provided. If an item of information is not known or was never provided in the video, write "unknown" in that space.

4. **While you fill out the incident report's <u>Narrative</u> section:**
   - Develop a brief outline on the notepaper first so you can see how the information looks in terms of organization *before* you write in the test booklet.
   - Refer to the incident handout to ensure you include all necessary details.
   - What you write must fit onto the three lined pages provided in that section.
   - Include any relevant information that you did not include on the form.
   - Use paragraphs and complete sentences, <u>not</u> outlines or bulleted points.
   - Check for accuracy, completeness, and organization.
   - Use the non-electronic dictionary and/or thesaurus to check for proper spelling, grammar, word choice and word uses.
   - Check for proper capitalization, sentence structure, and punctuation.

D. Study Materials

This section contains the following materials. They have been developed to help you prepare and practice for the WS exam. The sample materials and both examples involve a *missing person* incident.

- Practice checklist
- A sample incident video
- A sample incident handout
- A sample blank incident report test booklet
- An example of a "passing" incident report + feedback
- An example of a "failing" incident report + feedback

The table below shows where each item can be found. Items noted as available in this prep guide begin on page 18.

The items noted as available on the CSC webpage can be found at: https://www.columbus.gov/civilservice/uniformed-police-series/Police-Officer/.

Item	In this guide	On CSC webpage
Practice checklist	✔	
Sample incident video		✔
Sample incident handout	✔	✔
Sample blank incident report	✔	✔
Example of "passing" incident report	✔	
Example of "failing" incident report	✔	

How to Use the Materials

First, review and use the Practice Checklist provided on page 18 so you can be sure that you are using each item to your best advantage.

Then, review the sample incident handout, view the sample incident video, and complete the sample incident *before* you review the examples of passing and failing incident reports. Doing so will help you establish a baseline that you can use to measure your progress as you continue practicing.

E. WS Practice Checklist

Before you watch the sample video:
- ☐ Review the "Guidance" section above to ensure that you are familiar with the test features and the scoring dimensions beforehand.
- ☐ Assemble (1) a copy of the sample *incident handout*, (2) a blank copy of the sample *incident report* i.e. test booklet, (3) several blank note pages, (4) a pen or pencil, (5) a clock or timer, and (6) a *non-electronic* dictionary and thesaurus.
- ☐ Prepare a clock or timer to count down for one hour, or use a clock for reference: write down the time you started and then be sure to stop an hour later.

While you watch the sample video:
- ☐ Listen for answers to "who, what, when, where, why, how" questions.
- ☐ Take notes; note any conflicting or inconsistent information, and who provided it.

When you complete the sample incident report <u>Form</u> section:
- ☐ Refer to the incident handout and your notes to ensure that you include all necessary details.
- ☐ Provide an answer in each blank space provided. If an item of information is not known or was never provided in the video, write "unknown" in that space.
- ☐ Complete the entire form section neatly, accurately, and legibly.

When you complete the sample incident report <u>Narrative</u> section:
- ☐ Develop a brief outline on the notepaper first, to ensure good organization.
- ☐ Refer to the incident handout and your notes to ensure that you include all necessary details.
- ☐ Reference the non-electronic dictionary and thesaurus as needed.
- ☐ Only write on the three lined-pages provided in the Narrative section.
- ☐ Include any relevant information that you did not include in the Form section.
- ☐ Use paragraph form and complete sentences, <u>not</u> outlines or bulleted points.
- ☐ Check for accuracy, completeness, and organization.
- ☐ Check for proper spelling and grammar, and appropriate word choice and usage.
- ☐ Check for proper capitalization, sentence structure, and punctuation.

Evaluate your written response:
- ☐ Replay the sample video after you complete the report to identify missed details.
- ☐ Compare your report to the examples—which does yours most match?
- ☐ Review the feedback regarding each example; take note of items that apply to your own response, so you can identify what may need to be improved.
- ☐ Use the questions in the *Scoring Dimensions* section to evaluate what you wrote.

SAMPLE Incident Handout

Incident Type

Missing Person

Scenario Summary

You are a police officer with the Columbus Division of Police. Your name is Officer Jordan Sanders, badge # 214, precinct assignment 5B6. You are working in cruiser #50. You and your partner were dispatched on October 31st to a private residence at 3146 Mayfair Drive, Columbus, OH 43221 to handle a report of a missing person. The caller is Mary Russell. You were dispatched at 6:00 p.m. and you arrive at 6:11 p.m.

The scenes you are about to view will show your partner, Officer Steven Potter, interviewing the caller and a family member. Officer Potter's badge # is 324. You are to complete an incident report form and write a descriptive passage detailing the facts as presented in the scenes and narrative. Your incident number for this run is 143. Assume that the incident happened in the current year.

Relevant Information

A Missing Person Report is filed when a person is not where they are expected to be and their absence may have been involuntary or there is the possibility of danger.

*   Incident information (incident #, badge #'s, assignment #, car #, date and time of dispatch, location)
*   Relevant information for caller and witness/family member, if known (name, address, phone numbers, date of birth, social security number)
*   Caller's relation to missing person
*   Location where missing person was last seen
*   Missing person's place of employment or schooling
*   Date and time where missing person was last seen or range of time, if exact time is not available
*   Sequence of events
*   Description of missing person (name, address, phone number, date of birth, social security number, gender, race, age, height, weight, hair and eye color, and clothing)
*   Does missing person normally stay in contact with parties involved?
*   Include any instructions given by police personnel to all parties involved

SAMPLE Incident Report – Form Section – Missing Person

Provide an answer in each blank space shown below. If an item of information is not known or was never provided in the video, write "unknown" in that space.

INCIDENT INFORMATION

INCIDENT # _____   DATE OF DISPATCH _____   TIME OF DISPATCH_____
                         (Month, Day, Year - ex. 12/25/65)   (ex. 9:00 AM)

OFFICER BADGE # _____   PARTNER BADGE # _____   PRECINCT ASSIGNMENT _____

STREET ADDRESS_____   CRUISER#_____

CITY _____   STATE _____   ZIP CODE _____

CALLER / WITNESS / FAMILY MEMBER INFORMATION

LAST NAME _____   FIRST NAME _____

DATE OF BIRTH _____   SOCIAL SECURITY # _____
       (Month, Day, Year - ex. 12/25/65)   (ex. 123-45-6789)

STREET ADDRESS _____   GENDER _____

CITY _____   STATE _____   ZIP CODE _____

PRIMARY PHONE _____   OTHER PHONE _____

WITNESS / FAMILY MEMBER INFORMATION

LAST NAME _____   FIRST NAME _____

DATE OF BIRTH _____   SOCIAL SECURITY # _____
       (Month, Day, Year - ex. 12/25/65)   (ex. 123-45-6789)

STREET ADDRESS _____   GENDER _____

CITY _____   STATE _____   ZIP CODE _____

PRIMARY PHONE _____   OTHER PHONE _____

MISSING PERSON INFORMATION

LAST NAME _____   FIRST NAME _____

AGE _____ SOCIAL SECURITY # _____

STREET ADDRESS _____

CITY _____   STATE _____   ZIP CODE _____

GENDER _____   RACE _____   HEIGHT _____
                                                               (ex. 5 ft 8 in)

WEIGHT _____   EYE _____   HAIR _____
       (Pounds)   (Color - ex. brown, blue)   (Color - ex. black, brown)

PRIMARY PHONE _____   OTHER PHONE _____

OTHER DESCRIPTION _____

_____

SAMPLE Incident Report – Narrative Section – *Missing Person*

Your response should be accurate, complete, concise, and well-organized; and provide proper grammar, spelling, word usage, and sentence structure. Specific information that you wrote in the Form above (e.g., date of birth, SSN #, address, phone #s, gender, race, etc.) does not need to be repeated below, unless it is needed for clarity (e.g., individual names). Refer to the Incident handout to ensure you include all relevant information in your response.

SAMPLE Incident Report – Narrative Section – *Missing Person*

Narrative (continued)

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SAMPLE Incident Report – Narrative Section – *Missing Person*

Narrative (continued)

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Example of a "Passing" Report
Feedback regarding the example below is provided on page 27.

INCIDENT INFORMATION

INCIDENT # 143   DATE OF DISPATCH 10/31/22 TIME OF DISPATCH 6:00PM
(Month, Day, Year - ex. 12/25/65)   (ex. 9:00 AM)

OFFICER BADGE # 214   PARTNER BADGE # 324   PRECINCT ASSIGNMENT 586

STREET ADDRESS 3146 Mayfair Drive   CRUISER# 50

CITY Columbus   STATE OH   ZIP CODE 43221

CALLER / WITNESS / FAMILY MEMBER INFORMATION

LAST NAME Russell   FIRST NAME Mary

DATE OF BIRTH unknown   SOCIAL SECURITY # unknown
(Month, Day, Year - ex. 12/25/65)   (ex. 123-45-6789)

STREET ADDRESS 3146 Mayfair Drive   GENDER F

CITY Columbus   STATE OH   ZIP CODE 43221

PRIMARY PHONE ~~XXXXX~~ 277-0020   OTHER PHONE 595-33XX25

WITNESS / FAMILY MEMBER INFORMATION

LAST NAME Russell   FIRST NAME Hailey

DATE OF BIRTH unknown   SOCIAL SECURITY # unknown
(Month, Day, Year - ex. 12/25/65)   (ex. 123-45-6789)

STREET ADDRESS 3146 Mayfair Drive   GENDER F

CITY Columbus   STATE OH   ZIP CODE 43221

PRIMARY PHONE 277-0020   OTHER PHONE unknown

MISSING PERSON INFORMATION

LAST NAME Russell   FIRST NAME Hannah

AGE 17   SOCIAL SECURITY # 331-25-9941

STREET ADDRESS 3146 Mayfair Drive

CITY Columbus   STATE OH   ZIP CODE 43221

GENDER F   RACE W   HEIGHT 5ft. 5in.
(ex. 5 ft 8 in)

WEIGHT 125   EYE brown   HAIR long brown
(Pounds)   (Color - ex. brown, blue)   (Color - ex. black, brown)

PRIMARY PHONE 277-0020   OTHER PHONE 595-2424

OTHER DESCRIPTION last seen wearing blue jeans, a pink t-shirt, purple tennis shoes, a gray coat and red glasses.

NOTE: The Narrative example shown below was purposefully designed to be two pages long, thus the last *blank* page of the test booklet is <u>not</u> included below.

On October 31, 2022, my partner and I arrived at the residence at 6:11PM. We responded to a missing persons call. We interviewed Mrs. Mary Russell and her daughter, Hailey Russell.

Mrs. Russell told us she was worried because her daughter Hannah did not return home from school today. She was expected to be home by 4:30PM. Hannah was last seen at home around 7:00AM, this morning. Hannah is a senior at Central High School. Mrs. Russell called the school and was told Hannah attended all of her classes today.

Hannah rode to school with her twin sister, Hailey. Hailey said she came home at 2:30PM, but Hannah stayed after school to help another band student. Hannah should have been done by 3:30PM. Hannah was supposed to call Hailey when she was ready to be picked up. When ~~Hannah~~ ~~Hannah~~ Hannah didn't call by the time Mrs. Russell got home, Hailey drove to the school. Hannah was not there. ~~Hannah~~ (continued)

Hannah is not answering her cell phone. ~~Hannah~~ Mrs. Russell and Hailey stated that Hannah is very responsible. It is uncharacteristic of Hannah not to contact either of them. Mrs. Russell provided a current photograph of Hannah. Mrs. Russell agreed to a seach of her home, in case Hannah came home without their knowledge. Hannah was not found in the home.

We told Mrs. Russell that we would enter Hannah's information into our system, air her physical description, and follow-up with the high school. We gave Mrs. Russell our business cards. We asked her to contact us if she heard from Hannah or had any questions.

General Feedback Regarding "Passing" Example

Regarding the Form section:

- The form is complete—meaning all 50 spaces are filled in with an answer.
- The form follows instructions—the word "unknown" is written to indicate that that information was never provided in the video.
- The information is accurate—meaning every answer (aside from those that say *unknown*) matches what was stated by the witness in the video.
- Each answer is properly spelled and capitalized.
- Each answer is legible, and any answer that has been corrected has been *legibly* marked out and over-written.

Regarding the Narrative section:

- The response is divided into meaningful paragraphs.
- The response displays proper spelling, grammar, punctuation, capitalization, sentence structure, and appropriate word choice/usage.
- The provided information is accurate and well-organized.
- Each item of information included in the Form section that is also repeated in the Narrative section clearly contributes to the clarity of the Narrative response. For instance, in the example above, the names of the caller, witnesses, and missing person are indicated; those details help graders know who is being referenced.
- The author used last and first names, and did so for each person; this helped clarify who the author was discussing. In addition, when the author used pronouns (she, her), it was clear to whom the author was referring.

In summary:

A passing Incident Report includes all of the relevant information. The narrative is organized and written so that a reader who did not watch the video can understand what happened. The report answers who, what, when, where, why, and how the incident occurred.

NOTE: You will not lose points for scratched-out words, over-written information, or other marks, so long as answers are still legible.

Example of a "Failing" Report

Feedback regarding the example below is provided on pages 30 through 34.

INCIDENT INFORMATION

INCIDENT # 143   DATE OF DISPATCH 10/31/22   TIME OF DISPATCH 6:00
                   (Month, Day, Year - ex. 12/25/65)   (ex. 9:00 AM)

OFFICER BADGE # 214   PARTNER BADGE # 324   PRECINCT ASSIGNMENT 5136

STREET ADDRESS 3146 Mayfair Road   CRUISER# 50

CITY Columbus   STATE OH   ZIP CODE 43221

CALLER / WITNESS / FAMILY MEMBER INFORMATION

LAST NAME Russell   FIRST NAME Mary

DATE OF BIRTH _____   SOCIAL SECURITY # _____
   (Month, Day, Year - ex. 12/25/65)   (ex. 123-45-6789)

STREET ADDRESS Same   GENDER F

CITY Columbus   STATE OH   ZIP CODE 43221

PRIMARY PHONE 277-0020   OTHER PHONE 595-3352

WITNESS / FAMILY MEMBER INFORMATION

LAST NAME Russell   FIRST NAME Hannah

DATE OF BIRTH _____   SOCIAL SECURITY # _____
   (Month, Day, Year - ex. 12/25/65)   (ex. 123-45-6789)

STREET ADDRESS Same   GENDER F

CITY Columbus   STATE OH   ZIP CODE 43221

PRIMARY PHONE 277-0020   OTHER PHONE _____

MISSING PERSON INFORMATION

LAST NAME Russell   FIRST NAME Hailey

AGE 17   SOCIAL SECURITY # 331-25-9941

STREET ADDRESS Same

CITY Columbus   STATE OH   ZIP CODE 43221

GENDER F   RACE White   HEIGHT 5ft 5in
                                            (ex. 5 ft 8 in)

WEIGHT around 120   EYE brown   HAIR brown
   (Pounds)   (Color - ex. brown, blue)   (Color - ex. black, brown)

PRIMARY PHONE 277-0020   OTHER PHONE 595-2424

OTHER DESCRIPTION jeans, t-shirt, tennis shoes, coat and sunglasses

NOTE: The Narrative example shown below was purposefully designed to be just one page long, thus the last two *blank* pages are <u>not</u> included below.

My partner and myself met the Russell's about a missing person. Mrs. Russell last seen Hailey this morning when she wasn't home after school they called the police. The other daughter said she was supposed to pick up her sister after she was done with school stuff. When the mom got home she tells her that the sister never called for a ride, the mom was worried. When Hailey went to school she was wearing jeans, a t-shirt, tennis shoes, and red sunglasses. She had a physics test the next day she's probably studying with friends. In case the girl was home we looked around the residents but she was gone. Me and my partner gave them our bussiness cards and enter Hailey's information into system. We told the Russel's we would follow up. Mrs. Russell contacted the school and was told Hailey attended classes today.

Failing Example - Top Half of Form, with Feedback

"P.M." is missing

"Road" is incorrect
Should be "Drive"

All spaces must be filled in

INCIDENT INFORMATION

INCIDENT # 143   DATE OF DISPATCH 10/31/22   TIME OF DISPATCH 6:00
(Month, Day, Year - ex. 12/25/65)   (ex. 9:00 AM)

OFFICER BADGE # 214   PARTNER BADGE # 324   PRECINCT ASSIGNMENT 5136

STREET ADDRESS 3146 Mayfair Road   CRUISER# 50

CITY Columbus   STATE OH   ZIP CODE 43221

CALLER / WITNESS / FAMILY MEMBER INFORMATION

LAST NAME Russell   FIRST NAME Mary

DATE OF BIRTH _____   SOCIAL SECURITY # _____
(Month, Day, Year - ex. 12/25/65)   (ex. 123-45-6789)

STREET ADDRESS Same   GENDER F

CITY Columbus   STATE OH   ZIP CODE 43221

PRIMARY PHONE 277-0020   OTHER PHONE 595-3352

Actual address must be filled in

Incorrect phone number
Should be 595-3325

Failing Example - Bottom Half of Form, with Feedback

"Hannah" is incorrect
Should be "Hailey"

All spaces must be filled in

Actual address must be filled in

WITNESS/FAMILY MEMBER INFORMATION

LAST NAME _Russell_   FIRST NAME _Hannah_

DATE OF BIRTH _____   SOCIAL SECURITY # _____
(Month, Day, Year - ex. 12/25/65)   (ex. 123-45-6789)

STREET ADDRESS _Same_   GENDER _F_

CITY _Columbus_   STATE _OH_   ZIP CODE _43221_

PRIMARY PHONE _277-0020_   OTHER PHONE _____

MISSING PERSON INFORMATION

LAST NAME _Russell_   FIRST NAME _Hailey_

AGE _17_   SOCIAL SECURITY # _331-25-9941_

STREET ADDRESS _Same_

CITY _Columbus_   STATE _OH_   ZIP CODE _43221_

GENDER _F_   RACE _white_   HEIGHT _5ft 5in_
(ex. 5 ft 8 in)

WEIGHT _around 120_   EYE _brown_   HAIR _brown_
(Pounds)   (Color - ex. brown, blue)   (Color - ex. black, brown)

PRIMARY PHONE _277-0020_   OTHER PHONE _595-2424_

OTHER DESCRIPTION _jeans, t-shirt, tennis shoes, coat and sunglasses_

Actual address must be filled in

"Hailey" is incorrect
Should be "Hannah"

Incorrect

Inaccurate or too vague
Vague: "blue jeans" would be better
Inaccurate: Red glasses is correct

page 31

Failing Example - Top Half of Narrative, with Feedback

Wrong pronoun
Should be "I"

"Seen" here is incorrect grammar
Should be "saw"

Second sentence is a run on sentence
A period should go after "school"

"Hailey" is incorrect
Should be "Hannah"

My partner and myself met the Russell's about a missing person. Mrs. Russell last seen Hailey this morning when she wasn't home after school they called the police. The other daughter said she was supposed to pick up her sister after she was done with school stuff. When the mom got home she tells her that the sister never called for a ride, the mom was worried. When Hailey went to school she was wearing jeans, a t-shirt, tennis shoes, and red sunglasses. She had a physics test the next

Missing comma

Wrong verb tense
Should be "told"

This is a comma splice
The comma can be replaced with a period

"She" is not specific enough here
Actual name would be better
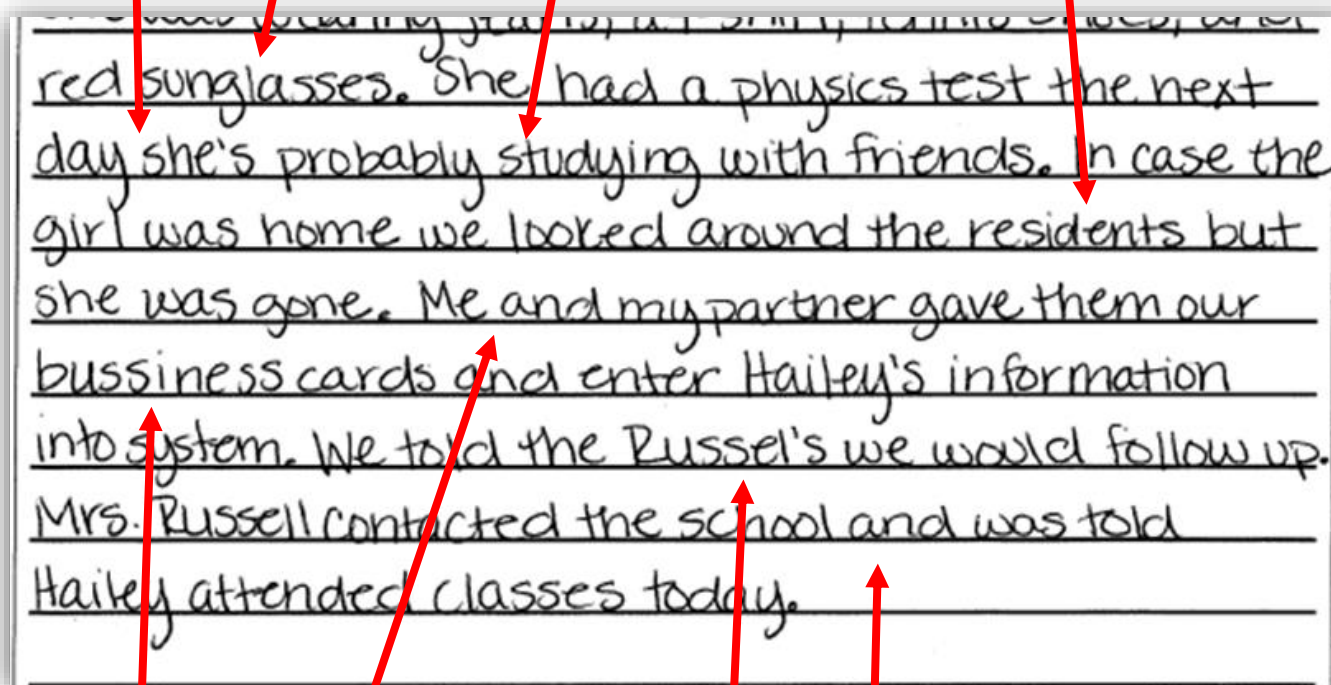
"Stuff" is too vague
The actions need to be specified

Failing Example - Bottom Half of Form, with Feedback

Missing period; a period should be placed after "day"

"Red sunglasses" is incorrect; should be "red glasses"

The witness never reported that she had observed her studying with friends, thus the statement "She's probably studying with friends" is a speculation, not an observation. An incident report must detail what was actually observed or reported.

Incorrect; should be "residence"

red sunglasses. She had a physics test the next day she's probably studying with friends. In case the girl was home we looked around the residents but she was gone. Me and my partner gave them our bussiness cards and enter Hailey's information into system. We told the Russel's we would follow up. Mrs. Russell contacted the school and was told Hailey attended classes today.

"Me" is the incorrect pronoun here
Correct would be "my partner and I"

Incorrect spelling
Should be spelled "business"

The information in the last sentence could be placed earlier in the narrative for more effective organization

Incorrect spelling and punctuation
Apostrophe not needed
Should be spelled "Russells"

General Feedback Regarding "Failing" Example

Regarding the Form section:

- Certain answers are inaccurate or insufficient, and many fields are left blank. For instance, the time of dispatch is missing the "p.m."
- Some of the required form information was given on the Scenario Summary and Relevant Information sheet. The candidate could have improved their score by using the Scenario Summary information in the handout.
- Several fields are left blank. In some cases, the video did not include the information; the candidate could have improved their score by following instructions and writing "unknown" on those blank lines.
- The candidate mixed up the names of the two daughters on the form and then failed to indicate the daughters' names in the narrative. The fabrication, speculation, erroneous information, and lack of information suggest the author did not stay focused while watching the video. Improved focus, listening skills, and notetaking during the video may have significantly improved this response.

Regarding the Narrative section:

- It is not divided into paragraphs.
- It displays incorrect spelling, grammar, sentence structure, punctuation, and capitalization; and inappropriate word choice/usage.
- It contains inaccurate information.
- It is vague and lacks relevant details.
- It contains fabricated information.
- Some of the required form information was provided in the Scenario Summary section of the Incident handout. The candidate could have improved their score by using that information.

In summary:

The lack of paragraphs, poor word choice, and lack of proper punctuation contributed to a confusing narrative. The author could have created an outline before drafting the narrative to organize their thoughts and create meaningful paragraphs. After writing the draft, the author could have improved their score by reviewing their narrative and making corrections before submitting the report.

General Testing Tips

1. **Rest:** Try to get a good night's sleep before the test so that you are well rested and can do your best.

2. **Eat:** Eat appropriately before the test. Too little or too much food can hurt, rather than help.

3. **Dress comfortably:** Business attire is not required. We recommend bringing a sweater and dressing in layers so you can adjust your comfort to fit the temperature of the test room. Select clothing without large lettering, graphics, or logos. If you select such articles to wear, choose items that cannot be construed as offensive. While what you wear is not graded, it is important to present yourself positively.

4. **Location:** Be sure you know where the test center is located. Refer to your admission notice for the exact location, date, and time.

5. **Arrive early:** Arrive at least 15 minutes before your scheduled time. Allow extra time for traffic problems on test day.

6. **Relax:** When you arrive at the testing room, you will be assigned a seat. Try to relax and get comfortably settled as quickly as possible.

7. **Follow directions:** Be sure to listen to and follow **all** directions. If you have any questions, make sure you ask them before the test starts.

Confidentiality

All Police Officer Examination content is confidential. Do not share what you see and hear during each phase of the exam with any other person including other candidates or others who will or may be considering taking the exam. Sharing confidential test content with other candidates may give those individuals an advantage—but it could also lower *your* position on the eligible list since your position will be based on your score relative to the scores of all other candidates taking the test.

Additionally, sharing confidential information with any other person including other candidates may be grounds for disciplinary action, disqualification from the testing process, loss of your right to the examination or to certification or appointment, and may result in prosecution.

Final Police Officer Exam Results

To update exams, CSC rotates out frequently used exam questions. To rotate in new questions, the CSC includes some questions on the exam that are not scored. CSC staff collects and analyzes data on these questions to determine if they should be scored on future exams. These questions are not graded and do not play any role in determining a candidate's final score. Each section of the multiple-choice exam may randomly contain a few of these new unscored questions.

For example, you may answer 100 questions on Phase I, but only 80 of the questions count towards your score. When you receive your test results, the results notice may state you received a score of 70. That score would be out of 80, not 100. Thus, in this example, you missed only 10 scored questions.

To be scored on the SRA, candidates must first pass phases I and II. For candidates who pass *all three phases* of the examination, the scores from the SRA will be used to band candidates into the top (band 1), middle (band 2), or lower (band 3) bands. Veteran's preference points will be added to passing SRA scores of qualifying candidates before being placed within the respective bands. The list of eligible candidates in band 1, band 2, and band 3 form what is called an "Eligible List."

As the City considers eligible candidates for hire, the City will consider those in band 1 first and then those in band 2. After the City considers both band 1 and band 2, and if Training Academy spots are still available for new recruits, the City will consider band 3. Police Officer Eligible Lists are usually viable for one year. If an eligible candidate has not been hired within that year and still wants to be considered or reconsidered for the job, they should reapply during the next application period.

Police Officer Salary & Benefits

The Columbus Division of Police offers an attractive wage and benefit package that is competitive with private business and other major police departments.

Based on the December 2022 Pay Scale, a recruit starts at Step A with annual pay increases for the first four years:

A-Step: 0 - 12 months
      $32.37 / hourly
      $67,325.99 / annually

B-Step: 12 - 24 months
      $33.89 / hourly
      $70,485.21 / annually

C-Step: 24 - 36 months
      $35.53 / hourly
      $73,894.44 / annually

D-Step: 36 - 48 months
      $42.93 / hourly
      $89,293.45 / annually

E-Step: 48 mo. - 9 years
      $49.85 / hourly
      $103,134.91 / annually

F-Step: 9+ years
      $51.00 / hourly
      $106,089.58 / annually

Special Duty—Officers have the option of earning extra money by providing security and/or traffic control for private companies (outside of their duty hours) at the rate of $54.00/hour.

The benefits package includes:

- Paid Training – At our non-residential training academy.
- College Tuition Reimbursement – After 1 year of service.
- Life Insurance – $100,000 paid to the officer's estate.
- Health Insurance* – Covers officer and family at a cost of $91.67 per month for single coverage and $327.93 for family coverage. (Including domestic partnerships.) *Effective the first of the month following the hire date.
- Vision Care and Dental Plan – Effective the first of the month following 3 months worked.
- Health & Fitness Incentive (In-house Fitness Facilities).
- Leave Time – Vacation, Holiday, Sick, Family and Military.
- Fraternal Order of Police (F.O.P.) Union Representation.