



**New York State
Department of Civil Service**

Committed to Innovation, Quality, and Excellence

Additional Information

For Examination

No. 36-031 Associate Personnel Administrator

Test Dates: September 20, 2008 & November 1, 2008



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Governor

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Commissioner

Introduction

The New York State Department of Civil Service is providing this *Additional Information* to familiarize you with the written test for

Examination No. 36-031, Associate Personnel Administrator

In addition to the Introduction, the *Additional Information* includes sections on:

Written Test Scope and Test Dates

Written Test Formats

Multiple-choice questions

Job Simulation Exercises

Tips for Completing Written Test Materials

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Written Test Scope and Test Dates

The written test for this examination will be held on two test dates, **September 20, 2008** and **November 1, 2008**, along with written tests for other, related examinations in an Examination Series. You must participate on both test dates to complete the written test materials required for your examination.

For each test date, the total **Time Allowance will be 8 hours** for the Examination Series. This means you will have 8 hours to complete the test material for any one or any combination of tests administered on that date.

A separate **Admission Notice** for the written test will be sent to you for each test date. If you have not received your Notice three days before the test date, call (518) 474-6470 in the Albany area or, toll free at 1-877-697-5627 [press 2, then press 1].

The Admission Notice will tell you when and where to report to take the test. Allow plenty of time to travel to the test site, to find the correct location and to park, if necessary. Be sure to bring your Admission Notice with you to the test site, along with your photo identification, and two No. 2 pencils. You may also bring a quiet, hand-held, solar- or battery- powered calculator and a quiet lunch or snack.

The **Subject of Examination** presented on the following page describes the Subject Areas to be tested on each test date, as provided on the examination announcement.

Subject of Examination: The written test for this examination may consist of multiple-choice questions and/or situational judgment problems. The written test is designed to test for knowledge, skills, and abilities in such areas as:

Subject Areas to be tested on 9/20/08:

1. **Analysis of information** - This subtest will test for the ability to analyze information by reading, interpreting, analyzing, and drawing conclusions from text, data, charts, and other information sources, and identifying the most significant problem or issue; focusing on relevant data and text; identifying trends, relationships, and significant features; identifying explanations and/or solutions; selecting the most viable and/or logically defensible alternative(s); proposing, supporting, and evaluating alternatives; evaluating results and consequences; and recommending change based on continued analysis.
2. **Logical reasoning** - This subtest will test for the ability to reason logically by interpreting statements in an accurate and reasonable manner; identifying the logical relationships between related statements; determining the conclusions that can correctly be drawn as a result of information presented; distinguishing between relevant and irrelevant information; and applying logical principles to information provided.
3. **Written communications** - This subtest will test for the ability to communicate in writing through composing memos, letters, and reports that are based on well-founded mechanics and appropriate content. Such documents should be grammatically correct, logically organized, clear, accurate, use appropriate tone for the intended audience, and reach valid conclusions.
4. **Supervision** - This subtest will test for the ability to provide effective, direct/first-line supervision to a small work unit, by successfully engaging in activities such as developing constructive working relationships with staff, peers, supervisors, customers, and others; analyzing and resolving work-related issues and designing and implementing action plans; assigning, scheduling, and evaluating work; monitoring the quality, quantity, and timeliness of work; obtaining, analyzing, and communicating information to accomplish work; and resolving work-related problems.

Subject Areas to be tested on 11/1/08:

1. **Administering an agency position classification program** - This subtest will test for knowledge and abilities related to administering an agency position classification program, and will cover areas such as job analysis, job description, position classification, position allocation and reallocation, jurisdictional classes, earmarks, special salary treatments, and reclassification.
2. **Administration of employee benefits** - This subtest will test for knowledge and abilities related to administering employee benefits, and will cover areas such as health insurance, workers' compensation, retirement benefits, and attendance and leave.
3. **Managing agency workforce issues and programs** - This subtest will test for knowledge and abilities related to managing agency workforce issues and programs, and will cover areas such as succession planning; reductions in force (RIF); transfers; examinations; eligible list management; employee performance management; and appointments/terminations.
4. **Legal environment of public employment** - This subtest will test for knowledge related to the legal environment of public employment, and will cover areas such as equal employment opportunity, Public Officer's Law, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), employment eligibility, negotiated agreements, and the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

Written Test Formats

Each subtest will be presented in one of two test formats:

- multiple-choice questions, or
- job simulation exercises, consisting of situational judgment problems

More information on each of these written test formats follows:

Multiple-Choice Questions

Multiple-choice questions present candidates with a question or problem and four possible answer choices, labeled A, B, C, and D. Candidates must select the best answer choice and mark the corresponding letter of their choice on a separate, scannable answer sheet.

Multiple-choice questions are scored wholly right or wrong. No partial credit is given. Candidates who mark the correct answer on their answer sheet receive credit for their answer. Candidates who mark a wrong answer on their answer sheet do not receive credit, and they are not penalized for their error.

For subtests consisting of multiple-choice questions, candidate raw scores are based on the total number of questions they have answered correctly. No credit is deducted from a candidate's score for selecting the wrong answer to a multiple-choice question.

Job Simulation Exercises

Job simulation exercises present candidates with situational judgment problems, similar to those encountered on the job, and many possible answer choices.

Each answer choice is numbered. Candidates must select the best answer choice(s) presented and, on the separate scannable answer sheet, mark "A" for the choice(s) selected and "B" for the choice(s) not selected. Candidates must mark each and every answer choice as either one they are selecting or one they are NOT selecting.

All job simulation choices are scored. Each choice has a value of (+) or (-) or zero (0). For subtests consisting of job simulation exercises, candidate raw scores are based on the sum total of positive, negative, and neutral values of the choices selected.

Directions for Job Simulation Exercises and A Sample Job Simulation Exercise follow:

Directions for Job Simulation Exercises

The job simulation exercises will present you with situations that are similar to those you might encounter on the job. The job simulation exercise will start with **Background** information that will tell you about the job setting and your role in that setting. The Background may also include some job-related issues, situations, and/or resource materials for you to consider.

You will then be given a series of situations in simulation Sections. Each Section will present the situation and choices representing possible responses one could make in that situation. You are to read the information and select the best choice(s) to take to collect relevant information and/or resolve the problem(s) in the situation presented.

The job simulation exercise will start with **Section A**. The Sections will continue in alphabetical order (Section B, then Section C, etc.) to the end of the exercise. Each Section will present you with choices, and you are to select the most appropriate choice(s) from among those presented.

Instructions for Selecting Answer Choices

Each section will include an instruction on **how many** choices to select in that section. The instructions may tell you to:

- choose a specific number of choices, e.g., “**Choose ONLY ONE.**”
- choose “**up to**” a maximum number of choices, e.g., “**Choose UP TO THREE.**” (Candidates may choose fewer than three, but should not choose more than three.)
- choose as many choices as are appropriate, e.g., “**Choose AS MANY as are appropriate.**”

A choice can be positively, negatively, or neutrally valued, depending on the appropriateness of that choice in the situation presented. Follow the instructions to each section carefully. Failure to follow the instructions may result in a lower score.

Instructions for Marking Answer Choices

In order to be scored, all your answers must be recorded on a separate, scannable answer sheet. You are to mark “A” for the choices you select and “B” for the choices you are not selecting.

The following instructions will appear at the end of each Section:

- Mark '**A**' on your answer sheet if you are **selecting** that choice or action.
- Mark '**B**' on your answer sheet if you are **not selecting** that choice or action.
- You **must** mark **A or B** for **each** choice presented.

You must mark either **A** or **B** for each choice presented because your answer sheet will be optically scanned by a machine that reads the darkest filled-in circle next to a choice number as your selection for that choice number. Marking **A** for choices you select and **B** for choices you do not select will ensure that your choices are recorded accurately.

For example, if you mark **A** for Choice 1 and then decide to change your answer, you must completely erase the mark for **A**, *and* mark **B** for Choice 1. If you only erase the mark for **A**, the scanner will still identify **A** as your selection because it is the darkest “filled-in circle.” If you erase the mark in **A** *and* mark **B** for Choice 1 instead, the scanner will identify answer **B** as the darkest “filled-in circle.” Do NOT leave any numbered choice blank.

A Sample Job Simulation Exercise

Background

You are a newly-appointed employee in the Administrative Services Agency. As part of your current assignment, you are responsible for coordinating a training team of agency staff who provide seminars to the public about your agency's programs.

Continue now with Section A

Section A

Today is Monday, your first day on the job.

Last Friday, Alex, one of the training team members, held the first session of a new seminar on his own. When you arrive at work, you find an e-mail from your supervisor who indicates that the Commissioner has received negative reports from seminar participants. The participants complained that there were not enough seats or handouts at the Friday seminar session.

Alex is currently holding the second session with a different group at the seminar site, which is located outside the office. You would now: **(Choose UP TO TWO.)**

1. Leave a message on Alex's desk for him to see you tomorrow.
2. Contact your supervisor to find out more about the negative reports.
3. Talk to the Commissioner's staff about the complaints.
4. Go to the seminar and talk to Alex immediately.
5. Contact another training team member to find out more about the incident.
6. Contact the seminar site and leave a message for Alex to call you.

- Mark '**A**' on your answer sheet if you are **selecting** that choice or action.
- Mark '**B**' on your answer sheet if you are **not selecting** that choice or action.
- You **must** mark **A or B** for **each** choice presented.

END Of Sample Section A

Example for Marking Your Answer Sheet:

For example, in the sample **Section A**, a section with instructions to “**Choose UP TO TWO**,” a candidate who selected two choices, Choice 2 and Choice 6, would mark **A** for Choices 2 and 6, and **B** for Choices 1, 3, 4, and 5.

This is how the candidate’s answer sheet would look:

	A	B	C	D
1	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Solution to Section A

In the sample **Section A**, the *most helpful* steps to take to begin to collect more information about the problem are choices 2 and 6. Each of these choices is valued at +1. Choices 1, 3, 4, and 5 reflect steps that are either inappropriate or a waste of time, and these choices are valued at -1.

Listed below are all the choices presented in sample **Section A** and their assigned values:

1. Leave a message on Alex’s desk for him to see you tomorrow. **-1**
2. Contact your supervisor to find out more about the negative reports. **+1**
3. Talk to the Commissioner’s staff about the complaints. **-1**
4. Go to the seminar and talk to Alex immediately. **-1**
5. Contact another training team member to find out more about the incident. **-1**
6. Contact the seminar site and leave a message for Alex to call you. **+1**

Scoring Section A

Section A is a “**Choose UP TO TWO**” section. There are **two** positive choices in this section, choices 2 and 6. There are also four negative choices in this section, choices 1, 3, 4, and 5.

- A candidate would receive the maximum credit for this section (+2) if both positive choices and none of the negative choices were selected (i.e., marked A on the answer sheet for the positive choices 2 and 6, and B for the negative choices 1, 3, 4, and 5.)
- A candidate who selected two choices, one positive and one negative, would receive a score of 0, the sum of the positive and negative values of the two choices.
- A candidate who selected *only one choice* would receive the score associated with that choice (i.e., either +1 or -1). Candidates who did not select any choice would receive a score of 0.
- If a candidate selected *more* than two choices, only two choices would be scored. The negative choice(s) would be scored first, and then the positive choice would be added up to a maximum of two choices total.

Tips for Completing Written Test Materials

A few tips for completing the written multiple-choice questions and job simulation exercises:

- **Read all directions, instructions, and test materials carefully.**
Carefully read and follow all directions and any special instructions for the test. If sample materials are provided, review them to become more familiar with the format of the test material.

Read the test materials carefully. Be sure you fully understand the question or problem and the answer choices presented before you select and mark your answer.
- **Answer all questions designated for your examination(s).**
At the test site, you will be given Candidate Directions that identify the Test Booklet(s) and question numbers to be completed for each examination. You are responsible for determining which questions you are to answer, for making sure you have the correct Test Booklet(s), and for completing all test material required for your examination(s).
- **Mark your answers accurately on the separate, scannable answer sheet.**
At the test site, you will be given several Test Booklets and a separate, scannable answer sheet for each Test Booklet. The answer sheets will be scanned and scored by computer. To receive full credit for your answers:
 - ✓ Use a No. 2 pencil to mark your answers
 - ✓ Fill in all identification information required for each answer sheet
 - ✓ As you mark your answers, be sure the Test Booklet identified on the answer sheet matches the Test Booklet you are using.
 - ✓ As you mark your answers, be sure the number and letter of the answer you mark on the answer sheet matches the answer you have selected from the Test Booklet.
- **Budget your time wisely.**
At the test site, make note of the total time allowance, the starting and stopping times, and the test materials that you must complete for your examination(s).

You may look over all the test materials to help you estimate how much time you will need to complete each part.

Keep track of the time as you are working on the test materials. If you skip over some questions, be sure to come back to them before you complete the test and turn in your test materials.

Test Security

All written test materials for this examination are the property of the New York State Department of Civil Service. Candidates must not remove test material from the test site or reproduce, reconstruct, or discuss the test content with others.

Unauthorized possession or disclosure of the test material is prohibited by law. Candidates found to have violated test security may be disqualified from their examination(s) and may also be disqualified from taking any civil service examination for five years. In some cases, violations may also result in disciplinary action, fine, and/or imprisonment.

A few final words of caution:

- Do **NOT** remove any test material from the test room and do not paraphrase, reconstruct, or reproduce the test material in any way, either orally or in writing.
- Do **NOT** discuss the test material with others. Not all candidates take the test on the same day, and you may unknowingly pass along information to a candidate who has not yet taken the test.
- Be careful to observe test security requirements before, during, and after the test.

Test Review

Some of the written test materials used in this examination may be open to candidate review before the answer keys are officially approved for use in rating candidate answer papers.

The front cover of each test booklet will indicate which questions (if any) are open for this review. If you are interested in participating in this review, ask the Test Room Monitor for a *Review Information Sheet*. You must complete the bottom portion of the *Review Information Sheet* and give it to the Monitor before you leave the room on the day of the test. This is your only opportunity to make this request.

Any changes to the rating key made as a result of this candidate review will be applied to all candidates' answer papers. You do not need to attend the review to benefit from any key changes made.

Conclusion

Your attitude and approach to the test will influence how well you perform. A positive attitude will help you do your best.

Before the test ...

- Review this *Additional Information* to familiarize yourself with what the test will cover.
- Study and review the Subject Areas to be covered on the test.

On the day of the test ...

- Allow yourself enough time for traveling to the test site and locating your test room.
- Bring your Admission Notice, two No. 2 pencils, and a photo ID containing your signature; you may also bring a quiet lunch or snack, and any other items allowed.
- You may bring a quiet, hand-held, solar- or battery-powered calculator.
- Do **NOT** bring any device with a typewriter keyboard, such as a "Spell Checker," "Personal Digital Assistant (PDA)," "Address Book," "Language Translator," "Dictionary," or other, similar device to the test site.
- Do **NOT** bring cell phones, beepers, headphones, or any electronic or other communication devices to the test site. The use of such devices at the test site in the test room, hallways, restrooms, building, grounds, or other areas could result in your disqualification.
- Do **NOT** bring books or reference materials to the test site.
- Do **NOT** bring this *Additional Information* to the test site.

During the test ...

- Read and follow all directions on your Admission Notice, and test administration materials, including Candidate Directions, Test Booklets, and answer sheets.
- Follow the Monitor's instructions; raise your hand if you have questions or need help.
- Organize your work accordingly and keep track of the time.

After the test ...

- Request and complete a *Review Information Sheet* if a candidate review opportunity is offered and you want to participate.
- Continue to observe test security prohibitions by not removing any test materials from the test room, by not reconstructing or reproducing test materials, and by not discussing the test.

This Additional Information was developed to give you a better understanding of what to expect, and to assist you in preparing for this written test. We hope it will help you do your best on your test.

It is the policy of the New York State Department of Civil Service to provide reasonable accommodation to ensure effective communication of information to individuals with disabilities. If you need an auxiliary aid or service to make this information available to you, please contact the New York State Department of Civil Service Public Information Office at (518) 457-9375.

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