

**New York State
Department of Civil Service**

Committed to Innovation, Quality, and Excellence

A Guide to the Written Test

for the

Children and Family Services Specialist 1 Series

Including examinations for:

Children and Family Services Specialist 1

Children and Family Services Specialist 1 (Minority Group)

Children and Family Services Specialist 1 (subprogram Child Daycare)

Children and Family Services Specialist 1 (subprogram Child Welfare)

Opportunities at **work.**



INTRODUCTION

The New York State Department of Civil Service has developed this test guide to familiarize you with the written test for the Children and Family Services Specialist 1 Series. This test guide provides a general description of the subject areas that will be tested and the different types of questions you may see on the test. The Examination Announcement will specify the exact subject areas to be included on the particular examination you will be taking.

The written test for the Children and Family Services Specialist 1 Series has an overall time allowance of 6 hours. All the questions on the written test are multiple-choice questions. The test will cover the following six subject areas:

- 1. CURRENT ISSUES AND PROBLEMS IN ADMINISTERING CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES PROGRAMS:** These questions may include, but will not be limited to, areas of eligibility, child care, foster care, youth development and employment, domestic violence, juvenile justice, adoption, and child and adult protective and preventive services.
- 2. LAWS, RULES AND REGULATIONS RELATED TO CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES:** These questions will test for a working knowledge of the pertinent policies, laws, regulations, and administrative directives related to Children and Family Services.
- 3. UNDERSTANDING AND INTERPRETING WRITTEN MATERIAL BASED ON CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES RELATED DOCUMENTS:** All information regarding children and family services policies, rules, and regulations needed to answer these questions will be presented in the material supplied. You will be expected to interpret and evaluate information, make decisions, and establish priorities.
- 4. PREPARING WRITTEN MATERIAL:** These questions test for the ability to present information clearly and accurately, and to organize paragraphs logically and comprehensibly. For some questions, you will be given information in two or three sentences, followed by four restatements of the information. You must then choose the best version. For other questions, you will be given paragraphs with their sentences out of order. You must then choose, from four choices, the best order for the sentences.
- 5. LAWS, RULES AND REGULATIONS RELATED TO CHILD DAY CARE:** These questions test for a working knowledge of the pertinent laws, regulations, and policies related to the oversight and monitoring of child day care licensing and registration. Questions may also cover such topics as developmentally appropriate practice; ensuring the health and safety of children; and other relevant areas of child care, such as subsidy and program development.
- 6. ADMINISTERING CHILD WELFARE PROGRAMS:** These questions test for a working knowledge of the pertinent laws, regulations, and policies related to foster care, child and adult protective services, preventive services, adoption services, juvenile justice, and domestic violence services. Questions may also cover such topics as child welfare practice and program development; oversight, monitoring, and licensing of authorized agencies and other child welfare providers; and child safety, permanency, and well-being.

Information about which of the above subject areas will be covered on the particular examination you will be taking will appear on the announcement for that examination. Children and Family Services Specialist 1 and Children and Family Services Specialist 1 (Minority Group) will cover the first four subject areas; Children and Family Services Specialist 1 (subprogram Child Daycare) will cover the first five subject areas; Children and Family Services Specialist 1 (subprogram Child Welfare) will cover the first four subject areas plus the sixth subject area.

INTRODUCTION (continued)

The remainder of this test guide explains how you will be tested in each of the subject areas listed above. A **TEST TASK** is provided for each subject area. This is an explanation of how the question will be presented and how to correctly answer it. Read each explanation carefully. This test guide also provides at least one **SAMPLE QUESTION** for each subject area. The sample question is similar to the type of questions that will be presented on the actual test. This test guide provides the **SOLUTION** and correct answer to each sample question. You should study each sample question and solution in order to understand how the correct answer was determined.

NOTE: When you take your examination(s), you will be given Candidate Directions, which you should read very carefully so that you correctly identify the blocks of questions you need to answer for the examination(s) you are taking. Any block of questions that appears on more than one of your examinations needs to be answered only once. You will get credit for those questions on all of your examinations in which they appear.

SUBJECT AREA 1

CURRENT ISSUES AND PROBLEMS IN ADMINISTERING CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES PROGRAMS:

These questions may include, but will not be limited to, areas of eligibility, child care, foster care, youth development and employment, domestic violence, juvenile justice, adoption, and child and adult protective and preventive services.

TEST TASK: This subject area will consist of 15 questions. You will be presented with questions involving current issues and problems in administering children and family services programs in such areas as those mentioned above. You may be asked to define a term, to apply a concept to a specific situation, or answer a question based on current research. Each question will be followed by four choices. You must use your knowledge of children and family services programs to select the best choice.

SAMPLE QUESTION:

Which one of the following best explains why an adequate and dependable supply of child care contributes to increased work productivity?

- A. The availability of child care decreases absenteeism and tardiness among employees who have children.
- B. High wages for child care workers result in minimal staff turnover.
- C. The availability of child care ensures that child care costs are a low proportion of the income of an employee who has children.
- D. The increase in the number of child care providers reduces the difficulty in recruiting and retaining staff.

The correct answer to the sample question is A.

SOLUTION:

Choice A is correct. *An adequate and dependable supply of child care contributes to increased work productivity for parents and decreased absenteeism and tardiness.*

Choice B is incorrect. *Wages for child care workers are generally very low, and these low wages result in staff turnover because many child care workers leave the occupation to pursue higher-paying jobs.*

Choice C is incorrect. *Child care costs are a significant proportion of family income, particularly for working families who are on waiting lists for subsidies or are not eligible for them.*

Choice D is incorrect. *Many child care providers have difficulty recruiting and retaining staff due to the low wages that are paid to child care workers. This difficulty results in many child care providers having staff shortages.*

SUBJECT AREA 2

LAWS, RULES AND REGULATIONS RELATED TO CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES: These questions will test for a working knowledge of the pertinent policies, laws, regulations, and administrative directives related to Children and Family Services.

TEST TASK: This subject area will consist of 15 questions. You will be presented with questions involving laws, rules, and regulations related to children and family services. You must apply your knowledge of these laws, rules, and regulations to specific situations. Each question will be followed by four choices. You must use your knowledge of children and family services to select the best choice.

SAMPLE QUESTION:

For open indicated child protective services cases, when is the initial Family Assessment and Service Plan due?

- A. within 7 days of the indication date
- B. within 30 days of the case initiation date
- C. within 60 days of the indication date
- D. within 90 days of the case initiation date

The correct answer to this sample question is A.

SOLUTION:

Choice A is correct. According to Title 18 NYCRR 428.3 (f) (4), "Except for open indicated child abuse and maltreatment cases, an initial family assessment and service plan must be completed by the social services district or by a provider agency providing services pursuant to a purchase of service agreement, and must be approved by the case manager within 30 days from the case initiation date. **For open indicated child abuse and maltreatment cases**, an initial family assessment and service plan must be completed by the social services district or the provider agency providing services pursuant to a purchase of service agreement, and approved by the case manager **within seven days of the date that a report to the Statewide central register is determined to be indicated.**"

Choice B is incorrect. It states a measure of time from the **initiation** date.

Choice C is incorrect. It states an incorrect measure of time from the indication date.

Choice D is incorrect. It states an incorrect measure of time from the **initiation** date.

SUBJECT AREA 3

UNDERSTANDING AND INTERPRETING WRITTEN MATERIAL BASED ON CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES RELATED DOCUMENTS: All information regarding children and family services policies, rules, and regulations needed to answer these questions will be presented in the material supplied. You will be expected to interpret and evaluate information, make decisions, and establish priorities.

TEST TASK: This subject area will consist of 15 questions. You will be provided with passages to read and questions to answer about each. Everything you need to know to answer the questions is contained in the passage. To answer the questions correctly, you must base your answers **only** on the information contained in the passage.

BASE YOUR ANSWERS TO THE NEXT 2 SAMPLE QUESTIONS ON THE FOLLOWING READING SELECTION.

"If a child protective caseworker or other children's services staff person in a district is reported as a subject of a child abuse or maltreatment report, the recommended course of action is to arrange, through assignment by the SCR (State Central Register), for a contiguous county to conduct the investigation.

All reports of suspected child abuse and maltreatment involving any employee of the local district department of social services must be shared by the local Child Protective Service (CPS) with the appropriate Regional Office of the State Central Register. Regional Office staff are responsible for oversight and technical assistance and will determine the nature of necessary follow-up action (e.g., determining whether or not a personal contact with the caseworker responsible for the investigation is necessary). In order to oversee the investigation, the Regional Office may request information from or contact with the investigating district, in addition to being notified of the determination.

In the event a contiguous county finds that abuse or maltreatment is present and the initiation of a court proceeding is necessary, action based upon such findings must be undertaken by the subject's "home" district in its own jurisdiction. When the child(ren)'s welfare and protection have been assured, a determination rendered, and a rehabilitative treatment plan of services developed, the contiguous county's child protective service may terminate its involvement with the case. If the contiguous county has indicated* the case and recommended the provision of a rehabilitative services plan, the plan may be transferred with SCR approval to the local district in which the subject(s) reside(s). If a subject of a report requests an expungement review and/or a fair hearing, the contiguous county which made the original determination will be required to substantiate the basis for the indicated determination as part of the normal expungement review process. This county must also participate in the fair hearing in the subject's home district.

All reports of suspected child abuse and maltreatment involving other than child protective or children's services staff (e.g., staff of income maintenance programs, medical assistance programs, etc.) will be assigned to the local child protective service in the county of the subject's residence. Other special circumstances which may arise should be handled on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the SCR and the Regional Office."

*indicated - term used when evidence of abuse or maltreatment is found

SUBJECT AREA 3 (continued)

SAMPLE QUESTION 1:

An Alpha County Income Maintenance Worker who resides in Alpha County is accused of neglecting his child. In which one of the following ways, if any, should Alpha County most properly handle the investigation?

- A. There are no additional requirements for the investigation, because an Income Maintenance Worker's position does not require direct contact with children.
- B. Immediately contact the district in a contiguous county and ask them to take responsibility for the investigation.
- C. Unless other special circumstances exist, Alpha County may conduct the investigation and should share the information contained in the report with the State Central Register.
- D. The State Central Register will conduct the investigation because the Income Maintenance Worker works for the county.

The correct answer to this sample question is C.

SOLUTION:

To answer this question correctly, you must evaluate each choice against the information contained in the passage. Reject the choices that are not completely supported by information in the passage. Select the choice that is completely supported by information in the passage.

Choice A is incorrect. *It states that there are no additional requirements for the investigation, because an Income Maintenance Worker's position does not require direct contact with children. There is nothing stated in the reading that exempts any Local District workers from investigation.*

Choice B is incorrect. *It states that the Local District should immediately contact the district in a contiguous county and ask them to take responsibility for the investigation. Paragraph one states this is to be done if the subject is a Child Protective Worker or other children's services staff person.*

Choice C is correct. *It states that unless other special circumstances exist (the question does not state that they do), Alpha County may conduct the investigation and should share the information contained in the report with the State Central Register. Paragraph four states that, in the absence of special circumstances, the Income Maintenance Worker's "home" county, Alpha County, should conduct the investigation and, according to paragraph two, share the information with the State Central Register.*

Choice D is incorrect. *It states that the State Central Register will conduct the investigation because the Income Maintenance Worker works for the county. Nothing in the reading states that the State Central Register performs such investigations.*

SUBJECT AREA 3 (continued)

SAMPLE QUESTION 2:

According to the reading selection, an action against a Child Protective Caseworker indicated for child abuse would be brought by

- A. the contiguous county which did the investigation
- B. the county in which the Caseworker resides
- C. a county assigned by the State Central Register
- D. regional office staff of the State Office of Children and Family Services

The correct answer to this sample question is B.

SOLUTION:

To answer this question correctly, you must evaluate each choice against the information contained in the passage. Reject the choices that are not completely supported by information in the passage. Select the choice that is completely supported by information in the passage.

Choice A is incorrect. *It states that an action against a Child Protective Caseworker indicated for child abuse would be brought by the contiguous county. The reading states that, while the investigation would be done by a contiguous county, the **action** to be taken as a result of such investigation is to be taken by the worker's "home" county (paragraph three).*

Choice B is correct. *It states that an action against a Child Protective Caseworker indicated for child abuse would be brought by the county in which the Child Protective Worker resides. See the explanation for Choice A .*

Choice C is incorrect. *It states that an action against a Child Protective Caseworker indicated for child abuse would be brought by a county assigned by the State Central Register. Nothing in the reading states that this is to be done.*

Choice D is incorrect. *It states that an action against a Child Protective Caseworker indicated for child abuse would be brought by regional staff of the State Office of Children and Family Services. Nothing in the reading states that this is to be done.*

SUBJECT AREA 4

PREPARING WRITTEN MATERIAL: These questions test for the ability to present information clearly and accurately, and to organize paragraphs logically and comprehensibly. For some questions, you will be given information in two or three sentences, followed by four restatements of the information. You must then choose the best version. For other questions, you will be given paragraphs with their sentences out of order. You must then choose, from four choices, the best order for the sentences.

TEST TASK: This subject area will consist of 15 questions. There are two separate test tasks in this subject area.

- For the first, **Information Presentation**, you will be given information in two or three sentences, followed by four restatements of the information. You must then choose the best version.
- For the second, **Paragraph Organization**, you will be given paragraphs with their sentences out of order, and then be asked to choose, from among four suggestions, the best order for the sentences.

INFORMATION PRESENTATION SAMPLE QUESTION:

Martin Wilson failed to take proper precautions. His failure to take proper precautions caused a personal injury accident.

Which one of the following best presents the information above?

- A. Martin Wilson failed to take proper precautions that caused a personal injury accident.
- B. Proper precautions, which Martin Wilson failed to take, caused a personal injury accident.
- C. Martin Wilson's failure to take proper precautions caused a personal injury accident.
- D. Martin Wilson, who failed to take proper precautions, was in a personal injury accident.

The best answer to this sample question is C.

SOLUTION:

Choice A conveys the incorrect impression that proper precautions caused a personal injury accident.

Choice B conveys the incorrect impression that proper precautions caused a personal injury accident.

Choice C best presents the original information: Martin Wilson failed to take proper precautions and this failure caused a personal injury accident.

Choice D states that Martin Wilson was in a personal injury accident. The original information states that Martin Wilson caused a personal injury accident, but it does not state that Martin Wilson was in a personal injury accident.

SUBJECT AREA 4 (continued)

PARAGRAPH ORGANIZATION SAMPLE QUESTION:

The following question is based upon a group of sentences. The sentences are shown out of sequence, but when correctly arranged, they form a connected, well-organized paragraph. Read the sentences, and then answer the question about the best arrangement of these sentences.

1. Eventually, they piece all of this information together and make a choice.
2. Before actually deciding upon a human services job, people usually think about several possibilities.
3. They imagine themselves in different situations, and in so doing, they probably think about their interests, goals, and abilities.
4. Choosing among occupations in the field of human services is an important decision to make.

Which one of the following is the best arrangement of these sentences?

- A. 2-4-1-3
- B. 2-3-4-1
- C. 4-2-1-3
- D. 4-2-3-1

The best answer to this sample question is D.

SOLUTION:

Choices A and C present the information in the paragraph out of logical sequence. In both A and C, sentence 1 comes before sentence 3. The key element in the organization of this paragraph is that sentence 3 contains the information to which sentence 1 refers; therefore, in logical sequence, sentence 3 should come before sentence 1.

Choice B also presents the information in the paragraph out of logical sequence. Choice B places sentence 4 in between sentence 1 and sentence 3, thereby interrupting the logical sequence of the information in the paragraph.

Choice D presents the information in the paragraph in the best logical sequence. Sentence 4 introduces the main idea of the paragraph: "choosing an occupation in the field of human services." Sentences 2-3-1 then follow up on this idea by describing, in order, the steps involved in making such a choice. Choice D is the best answer to this sample question.

SUBJECT AREA 5

LAWS, RULES AND REGULATIONS RELATED TO CHILD DAY CARE: These questions test for a working knowledge of the pertinent laws, regulations, and policies related to the oversight and monitoring of child day care licensing and registration. Questions may also cover such topics as developmentally appropriate practice; ensuring the health and safety of children; and other relevant areas of child care, such as subsidy and program development.

TEST TASK: This subject area will consist of 15 questions. You will be presented with questions involving laws, rules, and regulations related to child day care. You must apply your knowledge of these laws, rules, and regulations to specific situations. Each question will be followed by four choices. You must use your knowledge of child day care to select the best choice.

SAMPLE QUESTION:

As part of the application process, an individual who is applying to become a registered family day care provider is required to submit which one of the following?

- A. copy of valid New York State driver's license
- B. documentation showing inspection of the home fuel burning system
- C. college transcript showing associate's degree or higher in a relevant field
- D. names of at least two professional references

The best answer to this sample question is B.

SOLUTION:

Choice A is incorrect. Family day care providers are not required to have a driver's license.

Choice B is correct. All family day care applicants must submit documentation that all home fuel burning systems have been inspected within the past 12 months.

Choice C is incorrect. Current regulations do not require a college degree for family day care providers.

Choice D is incorrect. Family day care providers are required to have three approved references.

Reference: Title 18 NYCRR Section 417.15 (c)(10)

SUBJECT AREA 6

ADMINISTERING CHILD WELFARE PROGRAMS: These questions test for a working knowledge of the pertinent laws, regulations, and policies related to foster care, child and adult protective services, preventive services, adoption services, juvenile justice, and domestic violence services. Questions may also cover such topics as child welfare practice and program development; oversight, monitoring, and licensing of authorized agencies and other child welfare providers; and child safety, permanency, and well-being.

TEST TASK: This subject area will consist of 15 questions. You will be presented with questions involving administering child welfare programs in such areas as those mentioned above. You may be asked to apply a law, regulation, or policy to a specific situation, to identify a proper course of action to take, or to describe a procedure. Each question will be followed by four choices. You must use your knowledge of child welfare programs to select the best choice.

SAMPLE QUESTION:

Which one of the following shows the hours of operation for the Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment?

- A. 8 hours a day, 5 days a week
- B. 12 hours a day, 7 days a week
- C. 24 hours a day, 5 days a week
- D. 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

The best answer to this sample question is D.

SOLUTION:

Choice D is correct. According to Section 422.2 (a) of the Social Services Law, “The central register shall be capable of receiving telephone calls alleging child abuse or maltreatment and of immediately identifying prior reports of child abuse or maltreatment and capable of monitoring the provision of child protective service **twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.**”

Choices A, B, and C are incorrect.

TEST SECURITY

The test you will be taking is the property of the New York State Department of Civil Service. Candidates may not remove test material from the test site and may not reproduce, reconstruct, or discuss the test content with others. Unauthorized possession or disclosure of the test material is prohibited by law and punishable by imprisonment and/or a fine. Additionally, candidates may be disqualified from appointment to the positions for which the examination is being held and from being a candidate for any civil service examination for five years. After you take the test, other individuals may want to talk with you about the test. You should not discuss the questions and answers, even in general terms. You should be careful that you do not inadvertently violate test security and put yourself at risk.

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 ...

- Study and review this guide to familiarize yourself with what the test will cover.
- Study and review the subject areas to be covered on the test.
- Study and review the New York State Department of Civil Service publication, "How to Take a Written Test" available online at: <http://www.cs.state.ny.us/pio/publications/howtotakeawrittentest.pdf>. You may also request a copy of this material by e-mail at examinfo@cs.state.ny.us or by calling the Exams Information Desk at 518-457-6216 inside the Albany area, or outside of the Albany area toll free at 1-877-697-5627.

On the day of the test ...

- Arrive at the test site on time.
- Bring your Admission Notice, two No. 2 pencils, a photo ID containing your signature, a quiet lunch or snack, and any other **allowed** materials.
- Do **NOT** bring this test guide to the test site.

At 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 anywhere on the grounds of the test site (this includes the test room, hallways, restrooms, building, grounds, and parking lots) could result in your disqualification.

During the test ...

- Read and follow all directions on your Admission Notice, test booklets, answer sheets, and Candidate Directions.
- Follow the Monitor's instructions.
- Keep track of the time.

After the test ...

- Do **NOT** remove any test materials from the test room.
- Do **NOT** paraphrase, reconstruct, or reproduce the test material in any way.
- Do **NOT** discuss the test material with others.

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