CAL FIRE FORMS COMPANY OFFICER ACADEMY (COA) PRACTICE TEST (SAMPLE)

STUDY GUIDE



SAMPLE STUDY GUIDE WITH LIMITED QUESTIONS

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Introduction

Preparing for a certification exam can feel overwhelming, but with the right tools, it becomes an opportunity to build confidence, sharpen your skills, and move one step closer to your goals. At Examzify, we believe that effective exam preparation isn't just about memorization, it's about understanding the material, identifying knowledge gaps, and building the test-taking strategies that lead to success.

This guide was designed to help you do exactly that.

Whether you're preparing for a licensing exam, professional certification, or entry-level qualification, this book offers structured practice to reinforce key concepts. You'll find a wide range of multiple-choice questions, each followed by clear explanations to help you understand not just the right answer, but why it's correct.

The content in this guide is based on real-world exam objectives and aligned with the types of questions and topics commonly found on official tests. It's ideal for learners who want to:

- Practice answering questions under realistic conditions,
- Improve accuracy and speed,
- Review explanations to strengthen weak areas, and
- Approach the exam with greater confidence.

We recommend using this book not as a stand-alone study tool, but alongside other resources like flashcards, textbooks, or hands-on training. For best results, we recommend working through each question, reflecting on the explanation provided, and revisiting the topics that challenge you most.

Remember: successful test preparation isn't about getting every question right the first time, it's about learning from your mistakes and improving over time. Stay focused, trust the process, and know that every page you turn brings you closer to success.

Let's begin.

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How to Use This Guide

This guide is designed to help you study more effectively and approach your exam with confidence. Whether you're reviewing for the first time or doing a final refresh, here's how to get the most out of your Examzify study guide:

1. Start with a Diagnostic Review

Skim through the questions to get a sense of what you know and what you need to focus on. Your goal is to identify knowledge gaps early.

2. Study in Short, Focused Sessions

Break your study time into manageable blocks (e.g. 30 – 45 minutes). Review a handful of questions, reflect on the explanations.

3. Learn from the Explanations

After answering a question, always read the explanation, even if you got it right. It reinforces key points, corrects misunderstandings, and teaches subtle distinctions between similar answers.

4. Track Your Progress

Use bookmarks or notes (if reading digitally) to mark difficult questions. Revisit these regularly and track improvements over time.

5. Simulate the Real Exam

Once you're comfortable, try taking a full set of questions without pausing. Set a timer and simulate test-day conditions to build confidence and time management skills.

6. Repeat and Review

Don't just study once, repetition builds retention. Re-attempt questions after a few days and revisit explanations to reinforce learning. Pair this guide with other Examzify tools like flashcards, and digital practice tests to strengthen your preparation across formats.

There's no single right way to study, but consistent, thoughtful effort always wins. Use this guide flexibly, adapt the tips above to fit your pace and learning style. You've got this!

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Questions

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1. Who establishes incident objectives and how does a Company Officer contribute?

A. The IC establishes objectives; the Company Officer translates them into tactical actions and assigns tasks.

B. The Company Officer creates objectives and assigns resources.

C. The IC establishes objectives; the Company Officer ignores them.

D. The Company Officer establishes objectives and the IC approves.

2. Which of the following is a handbook?

A. 1700 Handbook

B. 1701

C. 1831

D. Ryan White Act

3. In risk management, is performing dangerous tasks for limited gain acceptable?

A. Take calculated risks for modest gains.

B. Avoid unnecessary risks for minimal gain; preserve life and safety above all.

C. Proceed with any task if it might save property.

D. Place lives at risk to save a building.

4. Which statement best describes the relationship between risk and objective value on the fireground?

A. All risks should be avoided regardless of objective.

B. Great risk is acceptable if resources are abundant.

C. Only consider personal safety.

D. Weigh risk to firefighters against objective value; unacceptable risk should not be taken.

5. Which human factors must a Company Officer manage to maintain effective crew performance?

A. Fatigue, stress, communication barriers, and crew cohesion

B. Weather and terrain only

C. Equipment condition only

D. Personal relationships among crew members only

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6. Which policy addresses Employee Conduct?

A. 1080

B. 1081

C. 1091.2

D. Handbook 1000

7. Which statement best describes the Company Officer's accountability responsibilities at the incident?

A. Maintain accountability for only personnel.

B. Maintain accountability for both personnel and equipment.

C. Accountability is the IC's sole responsibility.

D. Accountability is optional.

8. Which statement best describes the role of a Company Officer in safety during incident operations?

A. Only respond when the incident is near completion.

B. Direct and supervise operations while ensuring safety.

C. Delegate all safety responsibilities to subordinates.

D. Focus solely on fire suppression.

9. Which policy governs the Substance Abuse Assistance Program Policy (SAAP)?

A. 1084.13

B. 1080

C. 1038.3

D. 1091.2

10. Which form represents CAL FIRE Operational and Program Notification?

A. Fc-800

B. Cf-31

C. Cf-66

D. Cf-198

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Answers

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1. A
2. A
3. B
4. D
5. A
6. A
7. B
8. B
9. A
10. A

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Explanations

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1. Who establishes incident objectives and how does a Company Officer contribute?

A. The IC establishes objectives; the Company Officer translates them into tactical actions and assigns tasks.

B. The Company Officer creates objectives and assigns resources.

C. The IC establishes objectives; the Company Officer ignores them.

D. The Company Officer establishes objectives and the IC approves.

The key idea is that incident objectives are set by the Incident Commander, and the Company Officer plays a crucial role in turning those objectives into concrete, workable actions for the crew. The IC determines priorities, safety considerations, and overall direction for the incident. The Company Officer then translates that direction into specific tactical actions, assigns tasks to individual firefighters, and ensures those tasks are carried out safely and efficiently. This role is essential because it keeps the crew aligned with the incident's goals while maintaining clear accountability and a practical, on-the-ground plan. The Company Officer monitors progress, adjusts assignments as conditions change, and communicates needs back up the chain of command to keep operations coordinated. The other options don't fit because the Company Officer does not establish the big-picture objectives; they implement and supervise the execution of objectives already set by the IC. Ignoring objectives or having the IC approve something the Company Officer creates would disrupt the established chain of command and unity of effort that ICS relies on.

2. Which of the following is a handbook?

A. 1700 Handbook

B. 1701

C. 1831

D. Ryan White Act

A handbook is a practical, user-friendly reference guide used for everyday tasks and quick consultation. The item that clearly fits this role is the one titled with the word "Handbook" in its name, signaling it as a ready-to-use guide. The other options don't indicate a handbook: they're just a year or number, or a name of a law (an Act), which is not a generic reference manual. So the item titled "1700 Handbook" is the correct choice.

3. In risk management, is performing dangerous tasks for limited gain acceptable?

A. Take calculated risks for modest gains.

B. Avoid unnecessary risks for minimal gain; preserve life and safety above all.

C. Proceed with any task if it might save property.

D. Place lives at risk to save a building.

Decision making in risk management puts life safety at the top and avoids unnecessary exposure to danger. If the potential benefit is small, the prudent approach is to avoid actions that could put responders or others at risk. This is why choosing to avoid unnecessary risks for minimal gain, with safety prioritized above all, is the strongest stance. Even when some risk-taking could be justified to protect property, the lives at stake and the crew's overall safety take precedence; the best practice is to minimize risk unless there is a clear, significant safety benefit. Actions that sacrifice lives to save a building are not acceptable because they violate the fundamental priority of safety.

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4. Which statement best describes the relationship between risk and objective value on the fireground?

A. All risks should be avoided regardless of objective.

B. Great risk is acceptable if resources are abundant.

C. Only consider personal safety.

D. Weigh risk to firefighters against objective value; unacceptable risk should not be taken.

On the fireground, decisions hinge on weighing risk to firefighters against the potential value of the objective you're trying to achieve. Some risk is necessary to save lives, limit damage, or gain control of the incident, but only if the expected benefit justifies it. If the risk to the crew is too great relative to what you stand to gain (the objective value), you shouldn't proceed. That's why this statement is best: it explicitly calls for evaluating how much firefighters stand to gain from an action and stopping when the risk is unacceptable. It also recognizes that safety to personnel isn't optional, but it isn't pursued at the expense of every possible objective either. In practice, consider factors like likelihood of success, potential for victim rescue, property impact, and the crew's safety protections and exit plans. If the risk outweighs the value of the outcome, step back or reassess.

5. Which human factors must a Company Officer manage to maintain effective crew performance?

A. Fatigue, stress, communication barriers, and crew cohesion

B. Weather and terrain only

C. Equipment condition only

D. Personal relationships among crew members only

The main idea is that managing human factors is essential for keeping crew performance effective. Fatigue reduces situational awareness and slows decision-making, especially during long or strenuous operations. Stress can cloud judgment and shorten attention, making it harder to respond appropriately under pressure. Communication barriers—misunderstandings, jargon, or noisy environments—lead to errors and slower coordination when conditions change quickly. Crew cohesion, built on trust and a shared understanding of goals and procedures, helps the team coordinate smoothly, speak up when issues arise, and function as a unit rather than as individuals. A Company Officer focuses on monitoring and mitigating these factors by planning for rest and rotation, supporting stress management, promoting clear and open communication, and fostering a positive crew climate where members feel safe to raise concerns. This combination of human factors management leads to safer, more effective performance on the fireground. Weather and terrain are critical operational considerations, and hardware or equipment condition is vital for safety, but those are not human-factor elements. Personal relationships matter, but focusing only on relationships misses the broader set of factors—fatigue, stress, and communication—that directly impact how well the crew performs under demanding conditions.

6. Which policy addresses Employee Conduct?

A. 1080

B. 1081

C. 1091.2

D. Handbook 1000

The policy dedicated to Employee Conduct is the one that directly sets the expectations for how staff should behave, including professional standards, ethics, and the procedures for dealing with conduct issues. It stands apart from policies that cover other topics (like training, safety, or general guidelines), so it's the reference you use when evaluating behavior and disciplinary actions.

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7. Which statement best describes the Company Officer's accountability responsibilities at the incident?

A. Maintain accountability for only personnel.

B. Maintain accountability for both personnel and equipment.

C. Accountability is the IC's sole responsibility.

D. Accountability is optional.

Maintaining accountability at an incident means knowing where every crew member and every piece of equipment assigned to your unit is at all times. The Company Officer is directly responsible for the people and gear under their command, so they must track both sides—who is working, their status, and location, and what equipment (SCBA, radios, tools, hose, etc.) is assigned and in use. This enables a quick PAR, aids in safety decisions if conditions change, and ensures prompt rescue if needed. If accountability covered only personnel, equipment could be forgotten or unavailable; if it relied only on the Incident Commander, the Company Officer wouldn't have the immediate, on-scene awareness necessary for day-to-day operations. So, the best approach is to maintain accountability for both personnel and equipment.

8. Which statement best describes the role of a Company Officer in safety during incident operations?

A. Only respond when the incident is near completion.

B. Direct and supervise operations while ensuring safety.

C. Delegate all safety responsibilities to subordinates.

D. Focus solely on fire suppression.

Directing and supervising operations while ensuring safety is the Company Officer's primary on-scene responsibility. As the first-line leader, they shape how the incident unfolds on the ground, making tactical choices that achieve objective while actively managing risk and protecting the crew. This means continuously assessing hazards, enforcing safety policies, ensuring proper PPE and procedures, and stopping any action that would put responders at unnecessary risk. They stay engaged throughout the incident, not just at the end, and they don't delegate safety entirely to others or focus only on one task like suppression. The Company Officer integrates safety into every decision and direction given to the crew.

9. Which policy governs the Substance Abuse Assistance Program Policy (SAAP)?

A. 1084.13

B. 1080

C. 1038.3

D. 1091.2

SAAP is guided by a specific policy in CAL FIRE's policy framework, and that policy sets how the program is run, including how employees seek help, how confidentiality is handled, referral steps, and supervisor responsibilities. The correct governing policy for SAAP is the one designated by the number 1084.13. This policy is specifically assigned to substance abuse assistance and employee support, providing consistent procedures department-wide. The other policy numbers correspond to different topics and do not cover SAAP, so they are not the governing rule for this program.

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10. Which form represents CAL FIRE Operational and Program Notification?

A. Fc-800

B. Cf-31

C. Cf-66

D. Cf-198

Operational and program notification is a formal channel for communicating status, changes, or updates about ongoing operations and programs to management. In CAL FIRE's form system, the code that matches this notification purpose is Fc-800. The prefix and numbering pattern signal that this form is intended for conveying operational and program information, which is why Fc-800 is the best fit for this item. The other form codes belong to different processes within CAL FIRE's procedures, so they're used for purposes other than this type of notification. They don't serve the specific function of communicating operational and program status, which is why they don't fit the question.

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Next Steps

Congratulations on reaching the final section of this guide. You've taken a meaningful step toward passing your certification exam and advancing your career.

As you continue preparing, remember that consistent practice, review, and self-reflection are key to success. Make time to revisit difficult topics, simulate exam conditions, and track your progress along the way.

If you need help, have suggestions, or want to share feedback, we'd love to hear from you. Reach out to our team at hello@examzify.com.

Or visit your dedicated course page for more study tools and resources:

https://calfireformscoa.examzify.com

We wish you the very best on your exam journey. You've got this!

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