TJCTC Justice Court Clerk Certification Program

**Program Description**

The Justice Court Clerk Certification Program allows experienced justice court clerks to demonstrate their knowledge of statutes, procedures, and ethical guidelines applicable to Texas justice courts. Justice court clerks who pass an examination receive certification as a Certified Clerk or a Master Certified Clerk. The Texas Justice Court Training Center creates and administers all exams.

**Eligibility Requirements**

**Employment**: Participants must be employed by a justice court in order to take an exam.

**Education**: Participants must provide proof that they have attended or are currently attending a 16-Hour TJCTC Court Personnel Seminar in order to take an exam.

**Exam Descriptions**

**Clerk Certification Exam**: This exam is designed to test a justice court clerk's courtroom knowledge and the ability to apply that knowledge to specific situations/cases. Clerks taking the Clerk Certification Exam will have the opportunity to select between the criminal or civil exam. Participants only need to pass one type of the Clerk Certification Exam in order to become a Certified Clerk. Additionally, participants only need to pass one type of Clerk Certification Exam to qualify to take the Master Certification Exam.

**Master Clerk Certification Exam**: Master Clerk Certification distinguishes clerks who are well-rounded and experienced in both substantive and procedural law (civil and criminal). Master Clerks are able to utilize their thorough knowledge of laws, resources, and ethical guidelines applicable to the justice court to assist justices of the peace and instruct new justice court clerks.
Exam Basics

Registration: Participants can register for the Clerk Certification Exam and Master Clerk Certification Exam through the TJCTC online registration system when registering for a 16-Hour TJCTC Court Personnel Seminar. Participants may also register on-site at the seminar.

Costs: TJCTC charges a $15.00 administration fee for all exams. Participants must pay the examination fee by providing a check or money order payable to “Texas State University” at the exam site. Exam fees cannot be refunded after the participant begins the exam.

Examination Schedule: The Clerk Certification Exam and the Master Clerk Certification Exam are administered from 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. on the last day of each 16-Hour TJCTC Court Personnel Seminar. The four-hour session includes a review with the instructor, time to complete the exam, and a post-exam review.

In-Office Examinations: Testing outside a 16-Hour TJCTC Court Personnel Seminar is available on an appointment-only basis. To set up an appointment, please contact Laura Villarreal, the Registrar, at least 3 business days before the preferred testing date. In-office examination dates and times are based on staff availability and TJCTC cannot guarantee that requests to take an exam on a specific date or time will be fulfilled. The Training Center will not reimburse expenses incurred by those who travel to an in-office examination. Free parking is available at the TJCTC office.

Exam Time: Participants are allowed 75 minutes to complete an exam. TJCTC encourages participants to manage their exam time carefully in order to answer all questions and sections of the exam.

Exam Policies: Participants are expected to:

1. Pay the $15.00 exam administration fee prior to entering the exam room;
2. Remain in the exam room until they have completed the exam;
3. Refrain from talking during the exam;
4. Silence all phones and other electronic devices; and
5. Place notes and study guides in a location where they cannot be accessed during the exam.
Exam Format: The Clerk Certification Exam is 50 questions long and consists of multiple choice questions. The Master Clerk Certification Exam is 80 questions long and consists of multiple choice and fill-in-the-blank questions.

Exam Results: To pass the Clerk Certification Exam, participants must correctly answer at least 35 questions. To pass the Master Clerk Certification Exam, participants must correctly answer at least 56 questions. Exam results will be presented on-site upon completion of the exam.

Feedback: At the conclusion of the exam, examinees will have the opportunity to complete an Exam Survey. The Exam Survey is a way for participants to give TJCTC feedback regarding the administration, supervision or any other matter related to the exam. For any additional feedback, feel free to contact Jennifer Morales, Court Personnel Program Administrator, at (512) 347-9927.

Recommendations

In order to achieve a successful testing result, TJCTC strongly encourages participants to take the steps listed below.

1. Take a Legal Advice & Ethics class (if the participant has not taken such a class within the past three years).
2. Complete a full 16-Hour TJCTC Court Personnel Seminar prior to taking an exam.
3. Attend the Clerk Certification Review Class on the first day of a 16-Hour TJCTC Court Personnel Seminar.
4. If taking the Master Clerk Certification Exam, ensure you have developed thorough knowledge of substantive and procedural law in both criminal and civil areas. (Developing this level of knowledge requires a substantial amount of experience and studying.)
5. Download and review the comprehensive Study Guide available for each exam type. (The Study Guide requires the participant to perform research and study the results of that research. This process will require a substantial time commitment and should be undertaken weeks or months prior to an examination. Do NOT arrive at a 16-Hour TJCTC Court Personnel Seminar expecting to perform a sufficient amount of studying at the seminar to pass.)

Certification: Successful participants will receive a certificate from TJCTC. Please allow 2 to 4 weeks from the date of the exam for TJCTC to mail the certificate. It is the
responsibility of the participant to notify TJCTC of any address or email changes by going online to www.tjctc-resources.org/member.asp, logging in, and clicking on the “View and Edit Student Information” link.

**Re-examination Policy**

**Requirement**: A participant must wait 30 days after the date of the prior exam before retaking a Clerk Certification Exam or Master Clerk Certification Exam.

**In-Office Re-examination**: Testing outside a 16-Hour TJCTC Court Personnel Seminar is available on an appointment-only basis and is open to any participant who wishes to retest. To set up an appointment, please contact Laura Villarreal, the Registrar, at least 3 business days before the preferred testing date. In-office examination dates and times are based on staff availability and TJCTC cannot guarantee that requests to take an exam on a specific date or time will be fulfilled. The Training Center will not reimburse expenses incurred by those who travel to an in-office examination. Free parking is available at the TJCTC office.

**Cost**: TJCTC charges a $15.00 administration fee for all exams, including re-examinations. Participants must pay the examination fee by providing a check or money order payable to “Texas State University” at the exam site. Exam fees cannot be refunded after the participant begins the exam.