

PRIVATE ALARM CONTRACTOR LICENSURE EXAMINATION INFORMATION

The following information should help you prepare for the Private Alarm Contractor licensure examination. Part I contains general information about testing procedures. Part II describes the content of the examination. Part III identifies reference materials that support the questions in this examination. Part IV provides a sample test that illustrates the type of questions that are in this examination.

Part I General Information

PURPOSE OF THE EXAMINATION

This examination is required for professional licensure of Private Alarm Contractors in Illinois under the Private Detective, Private Alarm, Private Security and Locksmiths Act. Copies of the Act are available from the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation (IDFPR). You must pass the test for each profession in which you want to be licensed. If you wish to be licensed as a Private Detective or a Private Security Contractor, consult the study guide for those examinations.

TEST VALIDITY & TEST LENGTH

The time limit on this examination is 75 minutes. This examination has been developed in consultation with licensed security alarm contractors under the jurisdiction of the IDFPR. Test items have been subjected to strict psychometric controls and reflect standards and practices documented in a survey of licensed private alarm contractors in Illinois.

CANDIDATE ELIGIBILITY

As mandated by Illinois statute, qualifications include verifiable experience in specified areas of employment and education as well as good moral character. If you wish to receive eligibility information, contact IDFPR for details.

APPLICATION FOR CANDIDACY

Obtain the proper application packet from IDFPR. Complete the packet as instructed. You will be notified of your candidacy status (Accepted or Denied). If accepted, you will be notified of the date, time and site of the examination approximately 10 days prior to the date of the test.

STUDY MATERIALS

Study materials for these examinations can be purchased directly from the publishers identified in Part II, from bookstores such as Barnes and Noble or Borders, their websites, or from other online sources such as Amazon.com. Internet addresses are provided whenever they are available.

MISSING AN EXAMINATION

There are no "make-up" examinations. You may re-register for the next examination date. **THERE ARE NO REFUNDS.**

SUCCESS/LICENSURE Candidates who score 70 or higher will receive a PASS notice and an application for licensure.

**FAILURE/
RE-EXAMINATION** Candidates who score below 70 will receive a FAILURE notice and an application for re-examination. **As long as your employment, educational experience and application remain valid, there is no limit to the number of times you can take this test.** Requalification may be necessary in some cases. Candidates are encouraged to retake the examination; many candidates who initially failed such an exam pass on subsequent attempts.

Part II Test Content

Each qualified candidate must demonstrate mastery of the following topics. The examination includes two to four questions in each subtopic in the content outline below.

Licensure & Practice Requirements	8-10 Questions
Qualifications and training	
Business practices	
Recordkeeping and reporting	
Violations and penalties	
Design/Install/Maintain/Service Fire Alarm Systems	31-35 Questions
Life Safety Code requirements	
Installation standards	
Wiring methods and materials	
Grounding and overcurrent protection	
Work hazards, safety and liability	
Commercial fire warning systems	
Fire control and sprinkler systems	
Household fire warning systems	
Detection and signaling systems	
Emergency voice/alarm systems	
Central station alarm systems	
Remote station signaling systems	
Communication links (POTS, DSL, RJ31X, etc.)	
False alarm protection	
Design/Install/Maintain/Service Security Alarm Systems	26-30 Questions
Life Safety Code requirements	
Installation standards	
Wiring methods and materials	
Grounding and overcurrent protection	
Work hazards, safety and liability	
Detection and signaling devices	
Commercial burglar alarm systems	
Central station alarm systems	
Residential burglar alarm systems	
Electronic access control systems	
Security and surveillance video systems	
Communication links (POTS, DSL, RJ31X, etc.)	
False alarm protection	

Part III Recommended Study Materials

Most publishers accept telephone orders to be charged to a credit card account. Internet addresses are provided for online catalogs for each publisher or source of these references.

Each qualified candidate for this examination is required to be familiar with all portions of the following references that impact on design, installation, maintenance and service for fire and security alarm systems. All revisions to state legislation and rules and to NFPA standards cited in this study guide and issued as of January 1, 2019, are included by reference in the study materials for this test.

National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Publications

These are available from the NFPA online catalog at www.nfpacatalog.org.

1. NFPA 72 *National Fire Alarm and Signaling Code Handbook, 2022*
2. *NFPA 730, Guide for Premises Security, 2023.*
3. *NFPA 731, Standard for Installation of Electronic Premises Security Systems, 2023.*
4. NFPA 101 *Life Safety Code or Life Safety Code Handbook, 2024*
5. NFPA 70 *National Electrical Code or NEC Handbook, 2023*
6. *Fire Alarm Signaling Systems, 4th Edition (2010)*
Richard Bukowski and Wayne Moore

Other References Supporting This Examination

7. *A Practical Guide to Central Station Burglar Alarm Systems, 5th Edition (2018)*
Publisher: The Monitoring Association (TMA), formerly CSAA
Website: <https://tma.us>
8. *2024 OSHA Construction Safety Handbook, 7th Edition*
Publisher: J.J. Keller & Associates, Inc.
9. Private Detective, Private Alarm, Private Security and Locksmith Act and Rules
Publisher: Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation
Website: <https://idfpr.illinois.gov/profs/alarm.html>

Part IV Sample Test

All questions on these examinations are multiple choice with one correct answer; choose the BEST answer to each question. For this sample test only, references are provided in the answer key to help you prepare for these tests. All questions on each examination are supported by the above references. This sample test illustrates the types of questions that will appear on each test, but none of these questions will be repeated on the licensure tests candidates will see on the day of their examinations.

1. Which of these is required in the personnel file of each alarm contractor employee for at least five years after termination of the employee?
 - A. The original of the employee's certificate of completion of basic or refresher training
 - B. A copy of the employee's active Firearm Owner's Identification Card (FOID) if the employee was ever armed while on duty
 - C. A copy of each report of discharge of any armed employee's weapon while on duty as filed within 15 days after the incident
 - D. The original of the employee's application for a permanent registered employee card

2. Which of these is **NOT** among the reasons an alarm contractor may be subject to disciplinary action for violations of the licensure act?
 - A. Failure to file a tax return
 - B. Nonpayment of child support
 - C. Defaulting on an educational loan
 - D. Suspension of an Illinois driver's license

3. Which of these sets criteria for determining where fire alarm systems are needed in most buildings?
 - A. NFPA 70
 - B. NFPA 72
 - C. NFPA 101
 - D. ASME/ANSI A17.1

4. Which of these organizations conducts tests and writes specifications for proper installation and use of alarm system components?
 - A. Underwriters Laboratories (UL)
 - B. International Codes Council (I-Codes)
 - C. National Fire and Protection Association (NFPA)
 - D. Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA)

5. Which statement is true about household fire warning systems?
- A. Most multiple station detectors are designed to sound alarms in all units within a system whenever an alarm condition exists for any detector in the system.
 - B. The burglar alarm signal in combined systems should take precedence over all other components of a household system.
 - C. Household systems are redundant for condominium units in which automatic fire detection and alarm systems are installed in common areas.
 - D. Local protective signaling systems in household use are appropriate only when the occupant is willing to contract with a central station for service.
6. Which statement most accurately describes NFPA standards for spacing and coverage of a protected area with spot-type heat detectors?
- A. All points on the ceiling must have a detector within 0.4 times the detector's listed spacing for each location within a protected area.
 - B. The coverage of a detector is a circle whose radius is 0.7 times the linear spacing of the detectors to be installed in the protected area.
 - C. The coverage of a detector is a rectangle whose dimensions are 0.7 times the longest dimension of the protected area.
 - D. Each alarm contractor is responsible for determining the spacing factor for the detectors to be installed in a protected area.
7. Digital communication transmitters for central station fire service
- A. may use a ground start telephone line.
 - B. must use at least two separate unlisted phone numbers.
 - C. must be installed with at least two separate means of transmission at the protected premises.
 - D. must send a test signal to the monitoring station to confirm line integrity at least once every week.
8. Which of these provides the most comprehensive installation standards for security alarm systems?
- A. NFPA 72
 - B. NFPA 101
 - C. NFPA 730
 - D. NFPA 731
9. Which of these most accurately describes proper installation of wiring in electronic premises security systems?
- A. All terminals must be color coded to indicate the proper connections.
 - B. The service loop for metallic wire at control panels must be at least 6 inches.
 - C. A minimum 10 inch service loop shall be at control panels and enclosures used for wiring terminations.
 - D. Wiring for low voltage electronic premises security systems may never be within two inches of any light or power circuits.

10. Which statement most accurately describes the UL ratings of extent of protection?
- A. Extent 1 is required for maximum discounts on most insurance policies.
 - B. Extent 2 requires protection of all openings, ceilings, floors and walls.
 - C. Extent 3 requires full building motion detection and contacts on all moveable openings.
 - D. Extent 4 requires contacts on all accessible doors and either motion detection in selected areas or contacts on at least two interior doors.
11. Which statement most accurately describes UL-certificated central station burglar alarm systems?
- A. All maintenance and repairs must be provided without additional cost to the property owner.
 - B. Any contract for UL-certificated residential burglar alarm service must include expanded protection.
 - C. UL must inspect the alarm company's system at least once a year to assure compliance with nationally reconized standards.
 - D. UL-Certificated residential service is required whenever an insurer requires a property owner to have a burglar alarm system.
12. Which of these is the most likely benefit from using video surveillance in retail establishments?
- A. Reducing vandalism
 - B. Controlling shoplifting
 - C. Managing access control
 - D. Limiting workplace violence

ANSWER KEY

Question	Correct Answer	Reference(s)
1	C	Rules, 1240.535 & 540
2	D	IL Compiled Statutes 447, Article 40
3	C	NFPA 101, 9.6; NFPA 72, page 3; Bukowski, pages 388-89
4	A	Bukowski, pages 388-89
5	A	Bukowski, pages 419-20
6	B	NFPA 72, 5.6.5
7	C	NFPA 72, 8.6.3.2.2.2
8	D	NFPA 72, NFPA 101, NFPA 730 & NFPA 731
9	B	NFPA 731, 4.6.4
10	D	TMA 5 th Ed., pages 35-36
11	C	TMA 5 th Ed., page 15
12	B	NFPA 730, 9.4 & 18.2.1.2.1