



Certified Jail Officer

Handbook for Candidates and CJO Application

The Jail Manager Certification Commission (JMCC) and the American Jail Association (AJA) promote the concept of voluntary certification for all jail personnel. Certification is one part of a process called credentialing. It focuses specifically on the individual and provides evidence of that individual’s competency in a specialized field. Certification signifies and documents the mastery of a strong level of knowledge. It plays a significant role in the elevation of the professionalism and provides an opportunity for professional growth by encouraging continued education, which, in turn, fosters effective management practices.

The *Certified Jail Officer (CJO)* Program was developed to assist jail officers in preparing themselves for advancement in jail management. The CJO Program provides jail officers with an opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and abilities as well as their commitment to the corrections profession. Jail officers who become CJOs embark on building a national professional portfolio of their career. All CJOs will be listed on AJA’s website and will periodically be printed in AJA Publications.

For the purposes of the Certified Jail Officer Program:

DEFINITION OF A JAIL OFFICER

A person (sworn or civilian) who supervises incarcerated individuals in jails or detention centers; and/or a person (sworn or civilian) who is in charge of those who supervise individuals incarcerated in jails or detention centers.

DEFINITION OF A JAIL

1. A county, municipal, tribal or regional facility that houses pretrial and sentenced inmates; and/or an institution that houses pretrial and sentenced inmates where the state is responsible for jail operations (Alaska, Hawaii, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Vermont, Delaware); and/or a private facility that houses pretrial and sentenced inmates and exists to serve the local jail needs of the community where it operates.
and/or
2. A facility that houses ONLY pretrial detainees, regardless of what entity operates it. This includes, but is not limited to facilities that house persons for less than 72 hours (lock-ups), facilities that house federal or military custody inmates awaiting trial (e.g. ICE, Marshals, Armed Forces), institutions where the state is responsible for the operations of jails, and private facilities.
and/or
3. A local government or private facility that houses convicted persons who, without this facility’s existence, would serve their sentence in the local jurisdiction’s jail. With regard to private facilities: the local government responsible for jail operations has contracted with a separate entity to replace that jurisdiction’s jail operations.

CJO Eligibility Requirements

Candidate is employed full-time for a minimum of **one year** as a paid jail officer.

Candidate adheres to the AJA's *Code of Ethics*.

Duration of Certification

Passing candidates are certified for a period of four (4) years and are permitted to use the CJO designation. CJOs receive a specially designed certificate and lapel pin attesting to their accomplishment. A professional listing is found on the AJA website, as well as AJA publications. For continuation of certification, see **RECERTIFICATION**.

STEP 1: Preparation

First, go to www.aja.org and download the **Resource List** found on the CJO page. This list provides valuable study resources. Next, download the *AJA Certification Online Registration and Exam Instructions* only if you are taking the examination by *Remote Proctor* (at home). Otherwise, candidates need to consult with their agency liaison to apply and schedule an exam.

STEP 2: Pricing and payment

Please note: The online application and examination process takes credit card payments only. If paying using a Purchase Order or agency check, a payment must be received at AJA prior to submitting an application. See mailing address below. Once notified via email that your payment/P.O. has been received, you may continue the application process. NOTE: AJA accepts payment from Navy COOL for military corrections personnel.

Application and Examination Fee:

AJA Member Remote Proctor \$195 AJA Member Test W Liaison \$140 Retake Fee \$120

AJA Nonmember Remote Proctor \$245 AJA Nonmember Test W Liaison \$190

*Leadership Academy Graduates \$100

**all leadership academy graduates must submit proof of graduation with their application.*

STEP 3: Applying

Scan the completed application along with an official job description into **ONE pdf for upload**. Go to aja.certifior.com and refer to the instructions on the *AJA Certification Online Registration and Exam Instructions* worksheet. If at any time you have questions, please contact Kendra Thompson, Certification Manager at 301-857-2323 ext. 301. The application review may take 3-5 business days.

STEP 4: The examination

If using the *Remote Proctor* version, make sure you go through the checklist found on the *AJA Certification Online Registration and Exam Instructions* worksheet for computer updates. Remote proctoring requires a camera and microphone on your computer. **Testing at your agency with a liaison does not.**

IMPORTANT: You have ONE (1) month to take the CJO examination once approved. If you do not take the exam within one month of your application approval, you will be locked out of the examination and will need to re-apply and pay additional fees.

Content of Examination

1. The exam is an online computer based examination composed of approximately **175** multiple-choice, objective questions with a total testing time of three (3) hours. Candidates will need **140** correct answers in order to pass **(80%)**
2. The questions for the examination are obtained from individuals with expertise in jail operations and are reviewed for construction, accuracy, and appropriateness by the JMCC.
3. The JMCC prepares the examination.
4. Questions are based on the Content Outline listed in this Handbook.
5. The examination is weighted in approximately the following manner:
 - I. Jail Operations 25%
 - II. Safety and Security 30%
 - III. Professional and Legal Concepts 20%
 - IV. Special Population Issues 15%
 - V. Support Services 10%

Content Outline

I. Jail Operations (25%)

- A. Inmate Supervision
- B. Inmate Discipline
- C. Inmate Grievances
- D. Intake/Release
- E. Housing
- F. Investigation of Crimes
- G. Inmate Workers
- H. Inmate Hygiene
- I. Facility Sanitation
- J. Visitation
- K. Other

II. Safety and Security (30%)

- A. Use of Force
- B. Legal Issues
- C. Emergency Procedures
- D. Inmate Classification
- E. Contraband
- F. Inmate Transportation
- G. Suicide/Suicide Prevention
- H. Searches
- I. Key/Tool Control
- J. Restraints
- K. Facility
- L. Other

III. Professional and Legal Concepts (20%)

- A. Professionalism/Ethics
- B. Leadership Tools
- C. Physical Fitness/Stress Management
- D. Confidentiality
- E. Inmate Rights
- F. Communications
 1. Documentation
 2. Interpersonal
 3. Conflict Resolution
- G. Sexual Harassment/Sexual Misconduct

- H. Administrative Investigations
- I. Administrative Legal Issues
- J. PREA

IV. Special Population Issues (15%)

- A. Gangs
- B. Juveniles
- C. LGBT
- D. Substance Abusers
- E. Mental Illness
- F. Communicable Diseases and other Health-Related Issues
- G. Disabilities and Special Needs
- H. Foreign Nationals
- I. Elderly
- J. Special Housing
- K. Cultural Diversity
- L. Other

V. Support Services (10%)

- A. Medical
- B. Food
- C. Commissary
- D. Inmate Programs
- E. Volunteers

Pass/Fail Standard

The passing standard is a pre-determined standard of knowledge set by a criterion-referenced methodology and the JMCC. Using this methodology, there is no curve and candidates do not compete against each other. You may retake the examination as needed within 18 months of your initial application approval. The retake fee is \$120.00. After 18 months, you will need to submit a new application.

Report of Results

Upon finishing the online examination, Remote Proctoring results are emailed within 7-10 business days. If testing with a liaison, results are immediate. **If you have passed, a letter, certificate and certification pin is mailed within 3-4 weeks to the home address provided on your application.**

Sample Questions

1. Which of the following is a major aspect of linear supervision?
 - A. Indirect contact
 - B. Unrestricted accessibility
 - C. Structured chain-of-command
 - D. Continuous officer-inmate interaction
2. Which of the following is most appropriate when an inmate is injured?
 - A. Secure inmate in cell
 - B. Ignore injury if it is not serious
 - C. Contact the medical department
 - D. Leave the inmate alone until the external investigator arrives
3. What is the first step in problem solving?
 - A. Gather facts
 - B. Find a solution
 - C. Define problem
 - D. Consider limitations

4. Which of the following techniques is effective for combating the effects of stress?
 - A. Alcohol
 - B. Drugs
 - C. Exercise
 - D. Working Overtime

5. Which of the following best describes schizophrenia, mood disorders, and Alzheimer's disease?
 - A. Imagines diseases
 - B. Signs that an inmate is considering suicide
 - C. Conditions that can be cured with medication
 - D. Mental illnesses sometimes present in inmates

6. Which of the following is the most appropriate action when speaking with an inmate who does not speak English?
 - A. Place the inmate with the special needs inmates
 - B. Use body language and attempt to find a translator
 - C. Have an English-speaking family member translate
 - D. Place the inmate with non-English speaking inmates

Answers: 1. A 2. C 3.C 4.C 5.D 6.B

RECERTIFICATION:

You have two options to apply for recertification:

1. Training Requirement
2. Re-Examination

Option 1: Training Requirement

- Mark the appropriate box at the top of the **CJO Recertification Application Form**.
- Attach a copy of your current position description.
- Accumulate at least **80 hours** of correctional training between your last certification date and the date you apply for recertification.
- Submit a minimum of three original potential CJO examination questions along with supporting documentation.
- Submit your completed CJO Recertification Application with fees to AJA Headquarters **before** your certification anniversary date expires.

Fees: AJA Member: \$45 AJA Nonmember: \$95

Option 2: Re-Examination

- Mark the appropriate box at the top of the **CJO Recertification Application Form**.
- Obtain and read a copy of the *AJA Certification Online Registration and Exam Instructions* from the **aja.org** website.
- Scan pages 3–5 of the *CJO Recertification Application* along with a minimum of three original potential CJO examination questions, and a copy of your current position description into ONE pdf document.
- Log onto **aja.certifior.com** and create a username and password. Follow the directions in the instruction guide on how to upload your application, pay for the exam, and schedule your examination.

Fee: \$120

ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for recertification, the CJO must be currently employed as a jail officer, or have had no more than a two-year departure from such employment at the time of CJO's certification expiration date AND must state an intention to re-enter the field of jail operations.

It is the CJO's responsibility to meet the recertification criteria and to mail in or upload a recertification application **BEFORE** his/her certification anniversary date expires. Applications must be received FOUR (4) weeks before the certification anniversary date expires or an additional \$35 late fee will be assessed. If the certification lapses, the individual will have to re-apply and take the CJO examination. Fees are subject to change.

Certified Jail Officers who do not recertify or who fail to meet the criteria required for recertification will no longer be able to use the CJO designation and will no longer be listed as a CJO in the Professional List or in any AJA publication. If certification is suspended, and at some point in the future, the former CJO decides to become certified again, he/she will be required to proceed through the entire certification process, including taking the certification examination.

REVOCAION OF CERTIFICATION

Certification may be revoked or denied for any of the following reasons:

1. Falsification of an application and/or CJO Application,
2. Misrepresentation of certification,
3. Breach of existing ethical standards of professional practice as stated in the AJA Code of Ethics.

An appeals mechanism for challenging revocation or denial of certification is available.

(See Certified Jail Officer application below)



Certified Jail Officer Application

Required Documentation:

To be eligible for the CJO program, candidates must have a minimum of ONE YEAR paid jail officer experience.

Please scan and upload an official agency job description for all current and (if applicable) previous positions into ONE pdf with this application.

Type or Print Clearly. Once the application is received, allow 3-5 business days for verification.

Today's Date: _____

Name _____ AJA Member ID# _____
(Print your name as you would want it to appear on a certificate.) AJA Membership not required.

Home Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ - _____

Office Telephone Number: (____) _____ Fax: (____) _____

Current Employing Agency: _____

Facility Name if different than Agency: _____

Agency Address: _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ - _____

Office Telephone Number: (____) _____

Work E-Mail Address: _____

Rated Capacity of Facility: _____

Current Position: _____

Dates: From: ____/____/____ To ____/____/____ Rank (if applicable): _____

Please check the paragraph below that describes your current agency. (Agency must meet the CJO program's definition of a jail.)

- County, municipal, tribal or regional facility that houses pretrial and sentenced inmates; and/or an institution that houses pretrial and sentenced inmates where the state is responsible for jail operations (Alaska, Hawaii, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Vermont, Delaware); and/or a private facility that houses pretrial and sentenced inmates and exists to serve the local jail needs of the community where it operates.
- A facility that houses ONLY pretrial detainees, regardless of what entity operates it. This includes, but is not limited to facilities that house persons for less than 72 hours (lock-ups), facilities that house federal or military custody inmates awaiting trial (e.g. INS, Marshals, Armed Forces), institutions where the state is responsible for the operations of jails, and private facilities.
- A local government or private facility that houses convicted persons who, without this Facility's existence, would serve their sentence in the local jurisdiction's jail. With regard to private facilities: the local government responsible for jail operations has contracted with a separate entity to replace that jurisdiction's jail operations.
- Other: (Describe)

The following statement must be signed by your immediate supervisor or director.

The information provided in the *Current Jail Officer Paid Position* section of this CJO Application for candidate:

_____ regarding his/her current position with _____
(Candidate name) (Agency name)

is, to the best of my knowledge, truthful, and accurate.

Supervisor's Signature

Title

Date

Supervisor's Printed Name

Note: If the applicant has been employed with his/her current agency for more than one year, it is not necessary to include previous agency information with the application.

Previous Employing Agency: _____

Address: _____

Position: _____

Rank (if applicable): _____ Dates: From: _____/_____/____ To _____/_____/_____

Please check the paragraph below that describes your previous agency. (Agency must meet the CJO program's definition of a jail.)

- A county, municipal, tribal or regional facility that houses pretrial and sentenced inmates; and/or an institution that houses pretrial and sentenced inmates where the state is responsible for jail operations (Alaska, Hawaii, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Vermont, Delaware); and/or a private facility that houses pretrial and sentenced inmates and exists to serve the local jail needs of the community where it operates.
- A facility that houses ONLY pretrial detainees, regardless of what entity operates it. This includes, but is not limited to facilities that house persons for less than 72 hours (lock-ups), facilities that house federal or military custody inmates awaiting trial (e.g. INS, Marshals, Armed Forces), institutions where the state is responsible for the operations of jails, and private facilities.
- A local government or private facility that houses convicted persons who, without this Facility's existence, would serve their sentence in the local jurisdiction's jail. With regard to private facilities: the local government responsible for jail operations has contracted with a separate entity to replace that jurisdiction's jail operations.
- Other: (Describe)

Submission of Documents

I do hereby certify that my biographical statement, as submitted to the AJA in connection with my application to take the examination, is true and correct in all material respects. I authorize the AJA to take whatever reasonable steps may be necessary to verify and confirm the accuracy of the information contained herein.

I understand that I must scan this application and job description into ONE pdf for upload onto the aja.certifior.com testing website, and I must take the CJO examination within **one month** of notification of eligibility per the CJO Handbook; and

I agree to the Code of Ethics of AJA and understand that any material misrepresentation of the information provided on the CJO Application may result in denial or loss of the CJO designation. I acknowledge that I have read and understand the *CJO Handbook for Candidates*.

The undersigned hereby agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the American Jail Association, Inc., its officers, directors, employees and agents from any or all liability, loss or damage whatsoever that may result from a denial of my application for certification as a Certified Jail Officer, failure to successfully pass the required examination, or to be awarded certification.

Signature

Date

Questions concerning the Jail Officer Certification Program should be directed to:

Kendra Thompson, Certification Manager
American Jail Association
1135 Professional Court, Hagerstown, Maryland 21740-5853
Phone: 301-857-2323
Fax: 301-790-2941
Email: kendrat@aja.org
Website: www.aja.org