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Private Investigator Certification Exam

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Question: 1

Which of the following statements about partial fingerprints is true?

- A. Partial fingerprints are admissible as evidence in court.
- B. Partial fingerprints are found less often than full fingerprints.
- C. Partial fingerprints are easier to lift than full fingerprints.
- D. Partial fingerprints are rarely smudged.

Answer: A

Explanation:

Partial fingerprints are admissible as evidence in court. This is fortunate because partial prints are found much more often than full prints. Finding and lifting partial prints is extremely difficult, however, so private investigators are advised to receive professional assistance unless they have been comprehensively trained in the subject. Partial fingerprints are often smudged, which can render them useless.

Question: 2

A private investigator records a telephone conversation between his client in the United States and a business associate in Canada. The client resides in a state with one-party consent laws. The business associate is not aware that the call is being recorded. Will this recording be admissible in court?

- A. Yes, because international calls are not subject to recording restrictions based on consent.
- B. Yes, because Canada also allows one-party consent.
- C. No, because international calls always require all-party consent.
- D. No, because Canada forbids the recording of any telephone calls.

Answer: B

Explanation:

This recording will be admissible in court, because Canada also allows one-party consent. The same is true of the United Kingdom. When one of the countries or states involved in a call has all-party consent laws, it should be assumed that the courts will apply the stricter set of laws. In other words, when a person in a state with one-party consent calls a person in a state with all-party consent, an investigator should have the consent of all parties before recording the conversation.

Question: 3

Under what circumstances may business records be admitted in court as hearsay evidence?

- A.The records establish facts contrary to the case being made by one party to the trial.
- B.The records are introduced and placed into context by a qualified witness.
- C.The records were made around the same time as the trial.
- D.The records have been maintained properly.

Answer: B

Explanation:

Business records may be admitted in court as hearsay evidence when the records are introduced and placed into context by a qualified witness. The witness must be able to identify the records and explain how they were produced. Some hearsay testimony may be admitted if it runs counter to a party's interest, but business records are not an example of this testimony. Official government records may be admitted as hearsay evidence so long as they are properly maintained, but normal business records are subject to a higher standard. The time at which the records were created does not bear on their admissibility.

Question: 4

Which field test is used to determine whether blood found at a crime scene is from a human being?

- A.Kastle-Meyer
- B.Leuchomalachite green
- C.Luminol
- D.Precipitin

Answer: D

Explanation:

A precipitin test is used to determine whether the blood found at a crime scene is from a human being. This test assesses the proteins in the sample, which indicate the species. The other answer choices are presumptive blood tests, meaning that they detect the presence of blood without providing any information about its origin. The Kastle-Meyer test, also known as the phenolphthalein test, begins with the collection of a sample. Ethanol and phenolphthalein are then added to the sample, and if no blood is indicated, peroxide may be added as well. If blood is present, the sample will turn pink. The leuchomalachite green test is much like the Kastle-Meyer test, except leuchomalachite green is used instead of phenolphthalein. The presence of blood in a leuchomalachite green test is indicated by the appearance of a greenish tint. In the luminol test, the presence of blood will be indicated by the appearance of a blue-green glow. One problem with this test is that saliva and bleach may produce a similar glow.

Question: 5

Which of the following is an example of permissible deception for a private investigator?

- A. Telling a suspect that he must confess or else his son will be injured

-
- B. Impersonating a police officer
 - C. Impersonating a doctor
 - D. Telling a suspect that his girlfriend has implicated him in a crime

Answer: D

Explanation:

Telling a suspect that his girlfriend has implicated him in a crime is an example of permissible deception. In general, law enforcement officers and private investigators are allowed to lie when it will not harm or endanger an innocent person or encourage an innocent person to make a false confession. Telling a suspect that he must confess or else his son will be injured exceeds the bounds of morality and legality. Many people would confess to a crime they did not commit under these circumstances. Similarly, impersonating a police officer or doctor is not allowed, because people in these positions elicit a higher level of trust from citizens.

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