

THE COMPREHENSIVE **CHRP/CHRL** EXAM PREPARATION MANUAL



INTRODUCING EMOND

In 1978, Professor Paul Emond published the first Emond casebook. It was a casebook on Real Estate Law, which was soon followed by Administrative Law and Constitutional Law casebooks. They were used at the time for classes at the University of Toronto and Osgoode Hall Law School.

Now, over 40 years later, Emond is one of the leading publishers of casebooks and textbooks used in legal education programs across Canada. Some of our bestselling publications cover the subject of Canadian employment law, providing instruction for students and guidance to help professionals practise effectively in this important area. Emond also offers exam preparation support resources for students writing the CHRP/CHRL Employment Law Exam with the goal of practising as a certified HR Professional or Leader.

Our practice exam is designed to mimic the format and content of the CHRP/CHRL Employment Law Exam, and to test your knowledge of essential legislation, regulations, and policies that will be covered on the exam. It has become apparent that many students would benefit from a resource that clearly summarizes the key facts and strategies that will help them prepare effectively for the CHRP/CHRL Exam. For this reason, we have published The Comprehensive CHRP/CHRL Exam Preparation Manual and made it available to students and the public alike.

We hope that by incorporating this manual and Emond's substantive practice exam into your studying regimen, you will feel confident that you have the knowledge and ability to succeed on your CHRP/CHRL Employment Law Exam. If you have any questions, feel free to get in touch with us. We wish you the best of luck on the road to success.

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1 THE CHRP/CHRL EMPLOYMENT LAW EXAM: KNOWING WHAT TO EXPECT ON EXAM DAY

A. THE STRUCTURE OF THE ONTARIO EXAMS

i. Overview

The Certified Human Resources Professional (CHRP) and the Certified Human Resources Leader (CHRL) Employment Law Examinations are the latter two of four multiple-choice exams required to obtain the CHRP/CHRL designation (the first two exams are the Comprehensive Knowledge Exam [CKE] 1 and the CKE 2). In order to be eligible to write the CHRP/CHRL Employment Law Exam, applicants must first successfully pass the CKE 1 or CKE 2, depending on which exam they will be taking. The CKE 1 is the prerequisite for the CHRP Employment Law Exam, while the CKE 2 is the prerequisite for the CHRL Employment Law Exam. Applicants seeking to write the CHRP/CHRL Employment Law Exam must complete the requisite CKE before registering for their exam.

The CHRP/CHRL Employment Law Exam is 3.5 hours long and is composed of 110 multiple-choice questions. The subject matter tested on each exam is broken down by weight into the following topics and subtopics:

46% – Employment Contracts & Terminations:

- 28% Termination
- 11% Contracts
- 7% Employee Perquisites

33% – Employer Obligations:

- 16% Duty to Accommodate
- 9% Misconduct in the Workplace
- 6% Common Law
- 2% Sale of Business

21% – Regulations and Legislation:

- 10% Employment Standards Act
- 4% Occupational Health and Safety Act
- 4% Jurisdiction
- 2% Pay Equity Act
- 1% Canada Labour Code

The purpose of the examinations is to test your competency in and understanding of workplace and employment laws in Ontario.

ii. Exam Materials

Applicants who have registered for the online or in-person CHRP/CHRL Employment Law Exam are not permitted to bring or have any study or exam materials with them during the exam. Students will be provided with access to the relevant employment and workplace statutes during their exam.

iii. Exam Cycles

Applicants can register to write the CHRP/CHRL Employment Law Exam during any of the two exam cycles offered annually by the Human Resources Professionals Association (HRPA). In each exam cycle, there are approximately 14 days during which the applicants can schedule a date to write their exam. The exams will place during the following months: March and September. Both cycles use the same set of testing formats and will have the same level of difficulty. This allows the students approximately four months of study time between exam sittings.

iv. Exam Layout and Question Structure

The CHRP/CHRL Employment Law Exam consists of 110 multiple-choice questions. However, 8–12 of those questions WILL NOT count towards your final score and are scattered throughout the exam. All the questions are randomly assigned and are not divided into subject-specific sections. The number of questions that each particular topic is assigned

will be reflective of the total weight given to that topic. For example, the exam is likely to contain many more questions about termination than on the sale of businesses.

The exam will consist of scenario-based multiple-choice questions with only one correct answer.

The CHRP/CHRL Employment Law Exam is 3.5 hours (210 minutes) long and is split into two sections of 1 hour and 45 minutes with an optional but recommended 15 minute break in between each section.

v. Exam Results

You can expect to receive your exam results from the HRPA electronically three to four weeks after the last day of your testing cycle. You will be notified of the date that your exam results will be released via email once a date for this has been determined. You will receive your final numerical score and a pass/fail designation. If you fail your test, you must wait until the following exam cycle to register for another attempt.

The HRPA does not set a pre-established passing mark for the CHRP/CHRL Employment Law Exam; however, historically, the passing mark for exams has ranged between 50 percent and 60 percent. The cutoff score for the exam is determined using the Modified Angoff Method (MAM). This method uses experts to evaluate each question and apply a rating based on how a “borderline candidate” would perform. To be considered a passing candidate, an applicant must score the same or higher than the borderline candidate. An applicant that scores below the borderline candidate will be deemed a failing candidate. Essentially, the MAM establishes the cutoff score by assessing the individual candidate’s performance against the borderline candidate.

The complex nature of this evaluation system is one of the most unnerving aspects of the exam. Students sometimes feel as if they are entering the exam blindly, without knowing their chances of success or even how well they need to perform in order to pass. But do not let the lack of information psyche you out. You must remain confident and focus on your own performance and understanding of the materials. If you are confident, focused, and well prepared on the exam day, your chances of passing are high.

B. THE LOGISTICS OF THE CHRP/CHRL EMPLOYMENT LAW EXAM

i. Permitted and Prohibited Items on Exam Day

The HRP is particular about what items you are allowed to have during the exam, what you can bring into the examination room, and how these items are packaged. Below is a basic list of rules that you should be aware of before the exam day whether you are writing online or in person. These rules will ensure that you are not forced to coat check important items that you expected to have with you during the exam or delay your start time by having to put items away. If you are writing in person, try to avoid having to coat check any items at all because the coat check lines can be lengthy and add to the time it takes for you to enter the examination room (or leave the examination centre at the end of the day).

The HRP has expressly prohibited applicants from having any of the following items during their exam:

- written notes
- published materials
- highlighters
- formula sheets
- books
- pens
- dictionaries or language dictionaries
- briefcases
- purses
- notebooks
- watches
- electronic devices
- computers
- cell phones
- wearable technology (e.g., pagers)
- cameras or electronic devices that have the ability to photograph
- optical readers
- photocopies of or otherwise copies of test materials
- outerwear
- hats
- food or drinks (including water)

Should you bring any of these items with you to your in-person exam, you will be required to coat check your belongings or leave them in an assigned locker. Should you have these items present during your online exam, you will be asked to remove them from your exam area.

During the exam, if you feel the need to remove light clothing items (such as a sweater, suit jacket, or scarf), you must hang these items on your chair instead of placing them on your lap or workstation. Outerwear clothing (such as heavy jackets, rain coats, and parkas) will not be permitted in the examination room during your in-person exam.

You will be permitted to use a calculator during your exam. If you are writing in person, avoid bringing your own calculator to the test centre. Calculators will be provided to applicants during the exam. You are also permitted to bring soft ear plugs (that have no wires/cords attached) with you into the in-person exam room, as well as tissues that are supplied by the test centre.

ii. Accommodation Requests

If you have been diagnosed with a documented disability by a qualified professional, you may file a request to receive reasonable testing accommodations by the HRP. As you will learn during your exam preparation, reasonable accommodations refer to any adjustment to the testing environment or examination material that would allow qualified applicants with disabilities to perform equally with non-disabled applicants. Reasonable accommodations will be provided to applicants until the point of undue hardship. The purpose of any accommodation is to ensure that equity is maintained throughout the examination process, not to provide an unfair advantage to one applicant over others. Any request that would result in the essential elements of the test being substantially altered will not be approved. If you do not agree with the HRP's proposed accommodation, you may file an appeal to the Appeals Committee for further review.

If you are seeking reasonable testing accommodations for your CHRP or CHRL Employment Law Exam, you can expect to go through the following steps:

1. Identify yourself to the HRP's Office of the Registrar and, if necessary, provide the appropriate documentation of your disability or disabilities.
2. Ensure that you have made your request for accommodation **before** you register for your test. If your accommodation request includes more extensive assistance, contact the HRP's Office of the Registrar as early as possible.

3. The HRPAs Office of the Registrar will attempt to respond to your request within two weeks; however, more complex cases may require more time.

For more information, visit the HRPAs Accommodation Policy at: <https://www.hrpa.ca/Documents/Designations/Accommodation-Policy-National-Exam.pdf>

iii. List of Suggested Readings

1. HRPAs web pages
2. [*The Law of Work: Complete Edition*](#) by David Doorey (Emond Publishing, 2017)
3. [*Employment Law for Business and Human Resources Professionals, Revised 4th Edition*](#) by Kathryn Filsinger (Emond Publishing, 2019)
4. [Emond Exam Prep’s CHRP/CHRL Employment Law Exam Course](#)

iv. Employment Law Examination Dates

https://www.hrpa.ca/hrdesignations_/Pages/CHRP-CHRL-Employment-Law-Exam.aspx

v. Examination Rules and Details

<https://www.hrpa.ca/Pages/Exam-Details>

vi. Required Identification

Remember to bring a **valid government issued photo ID** with you to your exam. You will not be permitted to sign in or start your exam without a valid piece of government issued ID. The following are examples of acceptable forms of identification:

- passport
- driver’s licence
- Indian status card
- Ontario photo card

(Note that health cards and student cards are NOT acceptable forms of identification.)

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A. DEVisING YOUR STUDY PLAN

We suggest beginning your study plan with a short review of any study materials, notes, and summaries you may have gathered or collected while completing the required courses in preparation for the CKE 1 or CKE 2. These materials should be useful as refreshers since most of the content tested on the CHRP/CHRL Employment Law Exam is found within these courses. Draft a tentative study schedule based on the length of your study period and the suggested materials outlined above. Having a pre-established study plan will give you a sense of direction and will motivate you to stay on schedule, rather than procrastinating and losing valuable time.

Once you've broadly gotten up to speed with some of the material you've covered so far, we suggest you go over *The Law of Work: Complete Edition* textbook (listed above) and read the table of contents to identify relevant sections that discuss any of the topics or subtopics covered in the exam. The textbook provides a clear and comprehensive explanation of legal principles as well as supporting case law to better understand the application of the law in real life circumstances. Most of the topics covered in the exam can be found in this textbook.

It is important for you to be mindful that writing a multiple-choice exam can be much more challenging than most people think, particularly when you face hundreds of questions, time constraints, and the added pressure of it being an exam. An effective study strategy to get you through the CHRP/CHRL Employment Law Exam requires preparation, planning, and practice.

B. PREPARATION

The first part of your exam strategy should include thorough preparation. This may seem daunting but having an in-depth understanding of the necessary skills and competencies needed for an HR professional, as well as the governing federal and provincial legislation, is critical. While you do not need to memorize everything, the better you know the

concepts and processes, and their application to the workplace, the better prepared you will be. We *strongly* recommend that you read through the relevant sections in [The Law of Work: Complete Edition](#) textbook at least once before your exam. Ideally, however, you should give yourself enough time to go through most sections twice. The goal of reading should be to understand the “big picture,” so focus on grasping the key concepts and understanding how the pieces fit together.

C. PLANNING

The next step in the study strategy is planning. Proper planning involves organizing your study process and giving yourself an adequate amount of time to prepare. Too often, people leave studying for the CHRP/CHRL Employment Law Exam to the last minute, thinking that they can cram for it. However, in order to ensure that you fully engrain the knowledge needed to pass your exam, you need time. Plan to start studying well in advance of your exam date and be sure to incorporate as many study resources into your plan as you can. Set out a schedule that keeps you on target with your study goals but also leaves you with enough time to write practice exams along the way so you can assess your progress leading up to the actual exam.

Though each person will plan their study schedule in a way that works best for them, a timetable that provides for sufficient time to read and review study materials and write practice exams on a regular basis is recommended. An effective approach is to start studying approximately six weeks before your exam. Spend the first three weeks reviewing your study materials and learning the statutes. After three weeks, [write your first practice exam](#) so you can evaluate where you are in your studies. Spend the next two weeks studying and going over your weaker knowledge areas and then write another practice exam. By the final study week, you should be confident in the material and well prepared for your exam. The final week should be spent doing a final review of the material and writing one or two more practice exams, focusing on your exam strategy.

There are several other factors to consider when devising your study plan:

1. **Other time commitments.** For example, whether you work full time or must care for a family member.

2. **Preferred learning style (e.g., audio, visual, or applied).** If you are an applied learner, you may want to make notes as you go along or type up summaries at the end of each topic.
3. **Reading speed and attention span.** Make sure you take breaks when your attention starts to wander but stay away from social media and the Internet during these breaks. Instead, go for a walk, make a cup of tea, or do a few stretches. This will ensure that your 5-minute break doesn't become a 50-minute break.
4. **Familiarity with the subject matter.** Working through topics that you didn't focus on while preparing for your pre-requisite CKE courses will likely require more time and effort. Be aware that days spent studying for the CHRP/CHRL Employment Law Exam will require more stamina and focus.
5. **Schedule or set aside regular hours in your day dedicated to study time.** Do not stay up late every night trying to cram in as much studying as humanly possible. This will create a negative sleep cycle, stress you out, and reduce your memory retention.

D. MIND MAPS AND CHARTS

Much like topic summaries, mind maps are another study tool that can help you make sense of complex concepts and procedures. Mind maps are similar to flow charts (illustrations that depict different processes using a series of bubbles that branch out in different directions). For the CHRP/CHRL Employment Law Exam, mind maps are most applicable to topics such as termination because they can simplify complex timelines and help you follow different if/then scenarios from beginning to end. For example, terminations can occur with or without cause, with or without notice, and with reasonable or statutory notice. A flow chart may be useful to conceptualize each of these scenarios during the earlier stages of studying.

E. PRACTICE EXAMS

Writing a practice exam is one of the most important steps in preparing for your CHRP/CHRL Employment Law Exam, and we strongly advise against skipping this step. A practice exam is an invaluable tool that will help you become familiar with the layout of your upcoming test.

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We strongly recommend you go over past study materials and textbooks before attempting the practice tests because there are a limited number of practice exams available to you. In order to fully utilize them to identify any gaps in your study material you want to be as prepared as possible before writing them. Writing a practice exam will give you an indication of your strengths and, more importantly, your weaknesses. It will reveal any errors, oversights, gaps, or problems with your study approach and give you enough time to address these issues before you take the actual exam. Additionally, taking a timed practice exam will prepare you for the actual exam conditions by forcing you to answer questions under time constraints, which will, in turn, help you increase your speed and efficiency.

Practice exams may also help improve your substantive knowledge of the materials, dramatically reducing the amount of time it will take for you to come to the correct answer during the actual exam. Practice exams can help you fill in gaps in your knowledge and, more importantly, will allow you to see how, in a given fact case scenario, the substantive law is applied in practice to a problem: It is one thing to understand a law on paper, but an entirely different thing to see how it is actually applied to situations.

After writing your practice exam, ensure you spend enough time reviewing it before attempting to write a subsequent practice exam. The goal is to ensure that you understand why each incorrect answer was incorrect and why each correct answer was correct.

It is important to understand that any practice exams you take will be different from the actual exam you will be taking. However, practice exams will still challenge you, test your understanding of the topics, and prepare you for the time limitations you will face on the actual exam.

All in all, the benefits of taking practice exams cannot be discounted—you will improve your familiarity with the topics, bolster your substantive knowledge of the law, and become comfortable with the exam structure and answering multiple-choice questions.

There are several companies that offer practice exams of varying lengths and price points. Choose practice exams carefully by considering who authored the questions, what their qualifications are, and the feedback that has been provided in public forums. Some

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practice exams include special features to enhance the study experience. For example, Emond's practice exams include:

- a flagging feature so that you can flag questions you want to double-check before submitting the practice exam, just as in the actual exam experience;
- subject performance analytics to help you identify your strongest and weakest subject areas, thus helping you target your studying approach more effectively;
- a detailed exam review section that displays the answer you selected, the correct answer, and a detailed explanation of the answer;
- up to four separate practice exams so that you can experiment with different strategies and reference materials; and
- exam questions that have been vetted by subject matter experts who have taught and/or practiced in the field of employment law.

To purchase Emond's CHRP/CHRL Practice Exam, visit www.emond.ca.

F. WHEN AND HOW TO WRITE A PRACTICE EXAM

Depending on which company you choose to purchase your practice exams from, different access periods and exam attempts will be made available to you. Ensure that you consider these in advance and do not hesitate to get in touch with a company if you have questions regarding their policies. If you opt to take Emond's practice exams, the practice exams can be written up to four times and expire at the closest CHRP/CHRL Employment Law Exam test period, meaning that you can have access to them for up to four months.

We suggest taking your initial attempt at a practice exam after you've completed your first reading of the study materials. Taking a practice exam too early may be demoralizing, and if you wait too long, you won't have much time left in your study schedule to review weak areas or make adjustments to your study plan. Ideally, you will complete your first reading of the study materials and a practice exam at least four weeks in advance of your exam date. This will give you plenty of time afterwards to review the topics that you performed poorly on in the practice exam. Subsequent practice exam attempts can be made closer to the exam date once you have reviewed any challenging topic areas.

It is a good idea to treat at least one of the practice exams as though it were the actual exam. Alternatively, you may choose to take the opposite approach with one of your attempts by going through the practice exam slowly and using all of the resources at your

disposal (including the Internet) to answer the questions. The benefit of this approach is that you may stumble on helpful study resources online that you can print and review before you take the exam.

G. EVALUATING YOUR PERFORMANCE ON A PRACTICE EXAM

Once you complete and submit a practice exam on emond.ca, you will receive your overall score, along with a breakdown of how you performed in each subject area. Note these statistics and spend more time reviewing the topic areas you performed poorly in during your next read-through of the materials. You should also review all the question explanations and try to identify any patterns in the types of questions you answered incorrectly—for example, ask yourself these questions during your review:

- Did I struggle with questions involving calculations?
- Did I score better on seemingly straightforward informational questions or on scenario-based questions?
- Were there keywords (e.g., “must,” “may,” “should,” “can,” “except,” and “unless”) that I missed, which could have indicated the right answer?
- Was I tricked by details or exceptions that I didn’t notice when quickly scanning through the materials for the answer?
- Were there questions that I got wrong simply because I didn’t read the question carefully enough?

3 EXAM WRITING AND TIME MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

A. OVERVIEW

Before entering the exam, spend some time considering the approach you will take during the exam to maximize your time and correctly answer as many questions as possible.

There are several aspects of preparation to consider here: logistics, time management (planning how quickly you need to move through questions and how you'll achieve this), and exam strategy (how you'll approach and analyze the questions).

B. STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

i. Logistics

If you are writing in person, you should aim to arrive at the exam centre an hour in advance, allowing time to navigate traffic, find a parking spot, check your belongings, and get settled for the day ahead.

Whether you are writing your exam at home or in person, ensure that you are properly hydrated and try to avoid eating high-sugar or high-carb foods that will weigh you down and make you feel sluggish right before your exam.

Beyond proper nutrition, some other creature comforts to consider include clothing (dress comfortably and have a sweater or cardigan available to you), earplugs (to block out distracting sounds), and Advil® or Tylenol® (in case of an emergency headache).

ii. Time Management Tactics

There are several time management strategies that may be helpful to you on the exam day. These are summarized in the section below.

C. BASIC APPROACH

The most basic approach is to take the exam at face value, reading each question and its accompanying answer choices and answering it to the best of your abilities before moving to the next question. The advantage of this strategy is that you will have an accurate idea of how many questions you have answered at any point in time, and you don't have to worry about skipping questions. The drawback of this strategy is that you might fall behind on time while struggling with challenging questions, possibly missing out on easy questions near the end that you could have answered correctly.

D. STRATEGIC FLAGGING

This approach is the opposite extreme of the basic approach. It involves reading each question and set of answer choices through and quickly choosing a tentative answer for each question before moving on to the next, while keeping track of all the questions that you've answered with uncertainty. The advantage of this method is that it ensures you gain all the "easy points" possible from the questions you can easily answer, while progressively working toward the hardest questions, thereby maximizing the value of your knowledge and time. However, there are two drawbacks to this approach: (1) you are more susceptible to errors or forgetting to go back to the earlier questions that you initially passed on; and (2) you lose time reading the questions and answers two to three times, which can be problematic unless you are a quick reader with a high reading comprehension.

E. COMBINATION APPROACH

The most balanced approach, which many students opt for, combines elements of the two strategies above. With this approach, you move through the exam question by question, answering those that you can deduce confidently and quickly. When you encounter a more challenging question that you suspect will require more than two minutes to answer, flag the question and return to at the end. If you don't think you'll have time to come back to the question at the end, you may venture a guess at an answer. This way, you will still gain all the easy and medium points possible without having to skip around too much or lose time rereading questions.

Whichever strategy you choose, ensure that you *do not* submit your exam with *any questions unanswered*. If you are down to the last two minutes, then guess blindly. A 25 percent chance of guessing the correct answer is better than a 0 percent chance of not answering the question at all. However, it shouldn't come to that. Remember: with any of the above strategies, you are reading every question and answer choices during your first time through the exam. Therefore, you should also be taking the opportunity to strike out any blatantly wrong answer choices—even for questions that you have flagged to return to later. This way, if you do run out of time, at least you will have narrowed your answer choices to two or three possibilities, which makes for a 33 percent to 50 percent chance of guessing the correct answer.

Because it is difficult to know which strategy will work for you, and how these theoretical strategies will actually play out in practice, you must try applying them with a practice exam well before the exam day. Doing so will help you accurately gauge whether the flagging approach will work for you or whether you'll run out of time before reaching the end. This will help you to see, in real time, whether it takes you 20 seconds to read a question and all the answer options or whether it takes you 40 seconds. Depending on what you discover, this will help you adapt your exam approach strategy and improve your speed with practice.

F. READING AND COMPREHENDING THE QUESTION

You might not think this deserves its own section for discussion, but believe us when we assure you that it does. Failure to properly read and understand what the question is asking is what most often sabotages a student's success on the exam. If there is one fundamental but crucial piece of advice that you take away from this manual, it should be this:

Carefully read and absorb every word of the question and every word of each answer choice before turning to your reference materials or selecting an answer.

People have different levels of reading **speed**, **focus**, and **comprehension**—the three factors that can make or break your success on the exam. In the previous section we discussed speed and time management. Here we want to emphasize the importance of focus and comprehension. Make no mistake: language is hugely important on the exam. Small phrases such as “cannot” versus “should not,” “may” versus “must,” and “including”

versus “except” can entirely change the crux of a question. Pay attention to these words when you see them, especially when they are found in ethics-related questions. If you miss a word like “except,” you’re guaranteed to end up with the wrong answer. If you jump too hastily to one answer choice before reading through all other answer options, you can miss a small variation that renders your answer incorrect and another one correct instead.

We cannot overemphasize how important **focus** and prioritizing the development of strong reading comprehension skills are in succeeding on the exam (we witness it firsthand with our practice exams). Fortunately, there are tactics you can use to aid you both in your preparations ahead of the exam and during the exam. A brief list includes:

- While writing the practice exams, exercise your ability to identify the key facts, subjects, and concepts embedded in the question. See if you can identify any red herrings (i.e., information or answer choices that are not relevant in determining the answer).
- While writing a practice exam, try reading the questions and answers out loud. This may help you focus.
- During the actual exam, use your pencil to indicate important elements of the question, including names, keywords (e.g., “except,” “must,” “may”), statutes/legislation, and timelines. This will help you to both focus on and identify important elements that you don’t want to overlook.
- Throughout the exam—and especially with respect to the case-based scenarios—you will be inundated with the different names of the people involved in a situation. It is important to clearly distinguish between each person, because answers with regard to questions involving conflicts of interest can often hinge on the names of different people.
- Keep track of the ages of the subjects in the question along with the jurisdiction in which they are located, because this can have a substantial impact on the application of certain laws (e.g., limitation periods).

Above all, try to stay calm and confident—even if you feel nervous about your reading speed, focus, or comprehension. Do what you can to improve your abilities in these areas but remember that this manual is simply about fostering your self-awareness so that you can make informed choices about how best to prepare yourself for the exam. It may illuminate weaknesses, but this is normal—everybody has weaknesses, and you can’t address all of them. As long as you address the weaknesses you can, you will vastly improve your chances of success on the exam.

4 MENTAL AND PHYSICAL PREPARATION

The week preceding the exam is a very important time. During this time you must focus on three things: getting enough sleep, eating healthily, and cultivating a positive mindset. The habits you set seven days before your exam can either help or hurt you on the exam day, so be conscious of your choices during this time.

Invest time each day preparing healthy meals and snacks consisting of whole foods that will sustain your body and mind. Eat eggs, fish, berries, nuts, and vegetables—all of which help to enhance your brain function and physical health and improve your mood. Avoid sugary foods and drinks (e.g., pop and candy bars) and heavy or processed foods (e.g., microwave meals, pizza, and white pasta). Not only do these foods contribute to huge sugar spikes and crashes that play havoc with your energy levels, they're also addictive and unhealthy, which is the reason we suggest cutting them out at least a week before the exam (the last thing you want is to be suffering from an upset stomach or sugar cravings the day of the exam).

Setting aside enough time to get a good sleep each night is equally important. Sleep is a critical factor in the development and retention of memories and it affects the speed and accuracy with which information can be recalled. Much of the learning that you do actually occurs *after* you're finished reading while you sleep that evening. Even if you are a night owl, take steps to foster a more productive sleeping schedule the week prior to your exam. Turn off screens and bright lights by 9:30 p.m. and get ready for bed. If you still feel awake and alert, relax with a novel or magazine or listen to a podcast—something that will engage you while easing the transition to sleep.

Both healthy eating and adequate sleep will help you to achieve a positive mindset in advance of the exam day. During this stressful period, caring for your mental health is as important as caring for your physical health. The attitude with which you enter the exam will have an impact on its outcome. If you are a nervous wreck, it will be hard to focus and perform well. Convincing yourself that you are going to fail will only set you on the road to do so. Your expectations and attitude matter, and they are the element that you have the most control over.

4 MENTAL AND PHYSICAL PREPARATION

Of course, you will feel some nervousness and anxiety leading up to the exam—that is natural. However, you must put effort into keeping your thought patterns positive and take actions that will help relax you and clear your mind. Do not indulge in failure fantasies or bring yourself to tears imagining the worst-case scenarios. When your mind begins to drift this way, actively try to divert it to more positive thoughts by focusing on your accomplishments and progress instead. Remind yourself: “If I was capable of passing the CKE 1 or CKE 2, then I am capable of passing this exam.” If you can’t quell the physical feeling of nervousness, try meditation or yoga and practise measured breathing.

The day before the exam will be the time that you experience peak nervousness. Do not worry about doing any substantive studying for the exam that day; instead, try to relax and prepare yourself mentally for the upcoming exam. Lay out the clothing you plan to wear, selecting layers so that you’ll be comfortable in varied temperatures. Pack or get out your ear plugs, Advil® or Tylenol®, and a cardigan. Prepare the coffee maker so that you can start it with the push of a button the next morning. Set your alarm—and a backup alarm on another device (just in case). If you are writing the exam in person, plan the route you’ll take to the examination centre and where you’ll park. Do not indulge in any alcohol that evening, because even one glass of wine consumed up to four hours before bed can interfere with your sleep quality, slowing your brain function and leaving you groggy the next day.

If you are writing in person and you live far from the examination centre, consider finding accommodations closer to the centre. This will ensure that you get an adequate amount of sleep and do not have to deal with a lengthy morning commute, which in Toronto may be exacerbated by public transit issues.

5 COMMON MISTAKES TO AVOID

The previous sections covered most of the key information you need to know and the pitfalls that catch unwary exam writers. Below are a few more common mistakes that you would do well to avoid.

A. SPENDING TOO MUCH TIME TRYING TO ANSWER ONE QUESTION

It's simple math—if you start letting yourself spend more than three minutes on each question, you will run out of time well before you finish the exam. If you spend eight minutes on one question, you've just sacrificed your opportunity to answer four other questions correctly.

B. SKIMMING THE QUESTIONS AND ANSWER CHOICES

Do not try to “skim” any questions or answer choices on the exam. You must read every word of every question and answer choice if you want to have the best chance at success. Some questions are specifically designed to trick you with a buried keyword (e.g., “not,” “did,” “or,” “will”) that controls the entire question, and if you skim too quickly you'll miss it. As mentioned above, some of the key details that can help you to properly answer a question can be found in the name, age, or jurisdiction of the subject of a question. It is important to read these sorts of details carefully in order to arrive at the proper conclusion. Certain questions will have answers that are quite similar and differ only in the name of the subject that is addressed in the answer. Clearly discerning the subjects in both the questions and answers will vastly improve your chances of getting the correct answer to the question.

6 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

A. HOW LONG SHOULD I STUDY FOR THE CHRP/CHRL EMPLOYMENT LAW EXAM?

The amount of preparation required to succeed on this exam will largely depend on your individual study plan, level of discipline, and ability to retain information. However, we suggest you set aside at least six weeks of study time before attempting to write this exam. You will be expected to retain a significant amount of information, and acquiring a firm understanding of the topics covered in the exam requires time. Also, you should ensure that you have enough time set aside to write as many practice exams as possible. Ideally, as you approach the exam date, you should attempt to take at least one timed exam to help recreate the conditions of the actual test.

B. SHOULD I STUDY FOR THE TEST ALONE OR WITH A GROUP?

Anecdotal evidence suggests that a combination of both approaches is most beneficial. Ideally, you want to begin by ensuring that you have covered all the necessary concepts and materials on your own before joining a study group. The reason for this is that it allows you and your group members to discover the areas you struggle with the most so that your time together can be used more efficiently on problem solving.

C. IF I FAIL MY EXAM, HOW SOON CAN I REWRITE IT?

If you fail your first attempt at the CHRP/CHRL Employment Law Exam, do not feel discouraged. Many applicants have had to write the exam a second or third time—eventually almost everyone manages to crack the code! The earliest time slot available for you to rewrite your test will be during the following exam cycle, which is typically four months later. Unfortunately, applicants cannot write a second exam during the same cycle. On the positive side, this gives you ample time to go over what went wrong the first time and plan on how to succeed on your next attempt.

D. HOW LONG ARE THE TEST RESULTS VALID FOR?

The test results are good for ten years.

E. HOW MUCH DOES THE TEST COST?

The cost for the CHRP/CHRL Employment Law Exam is \$240 plus applicable taxes.

F. WHAT IS THE PASS RATE FOR THE EXAM?

According to the HRP, the average pass rate in the past five years has been somewhere in the range of 55 percent to 60 percent. It is important to keep in mind that the exact pass rate for your exam may be more or less, depending on the performance of your peers.

LAST BUT NOT LEAST,
GOOD LUCK!

