

Principles of Public Service: To Serve & Protect Course Syllabus

What you will learn in this course

Principles of Public Service: To Serve & Protect

Are you familiar with the term “public service”? When we think about public service, our thoughts often turn to professionals such as police officers, EMTs, and firefighters. While these are well-known public servants, many others work to keep our communities safe, healthy, and productive. In this course, you’ll learn about many different areas of public service including education, civil engineering, and social services. You’ll also look at the requirements for public service in general as well as the specific skills needed to be successful in each area of public service. Who knows? You may even discover the career you were meant to pursue!

Unit 1: What Is Public Service?

This unit defines and explores public service. This field includes a wide variety of professions that have in common working for the public good. Everyone in public service, from first responders in emergencies to the individual that mows the lawn at city hall, has a role in keeping society functioning well. Much public service work happens through government agencies that set and enforce the rules and regulations required to keep societies safe. However, public service work is also about considering the future. This requires finding solutions for current problems and anticipating what challenges lie ahead. It also means having a clear vision of where an agency hopes to be in the upcoming decades and how to get there. When these visions are combined with a clear structure, the daily business of public service occurs. Part of these everyday operations includes making decisions that will impact the future, so they need to be made wisely.

What you will learn in this unit?

- Analyze economic, political, and social trends likely to impact an agency or department.
- Discuss the need to infuse understanding of vision, missions, and goals into all departmental activities.
- Define the concept of risk management.
- Learn how to seek a variety of input from all stakeholders.
- Assess the impact of probable changes on the public.

Unit 2: The Business of Government

This unit explores the elements of a thriving community—the goal of all of those in public service. Economic health is an important part of creating a place that attracts new industries and talented workers. Although those in public service use much the same tools for managing money as those in private businesses or individual households do, they have the important job of keeping clear financial records. Because those in public service must be held accountable for the

funds that they control, their records are regularly reviewed and kept according to the standards for government accounting. Although there are specific standards for government, the principles of developing a good budget apply to individuals as well.

What you will learn in this unit?

- Maintain financial records.
- Prepare and administer budgets.
- Develop a personal budget and financial goals.
- Construct charts, tables, and graphs using functions and data.
- Analyze government resources to find possibilities for new or increased funding of programs.

Unit 3: Working Together

This unit explores the elements of an effective workforce. Because the public sector depends on recruiting and maintaining excellent employees, human resources has a variety of tools for identifying them and keeping their skills up-to-date. Employees have the responsibility to present themselves professionally and do their part to create a positive work environment. In the public sector, management is responsible for making sure that work gets done. However, employees can do their part by having excellent communication and professional skills. Although the public and private sectors have slightly different goals and expectations, the qualities of a good employee apply in both.

What you will learn in this unit?

- Identify traits for retaining employment.
- Demonstrate positive work behaviors needed to be employable.
- Compare management of government and nonprofit agencies to management in the private sector.
- Explain various management theories—such as Theory X, Theory Y, and Theory Z—and whether they are effective.
- Develop expansive professional networks internally and with other organizations to broaden communication.

Unit 4: Leadership & Getting the Job Done

This unit explores the elements of effective leadership. Working in public service often means handling the unexpected, so employees need to be ready to give members of the public the guidance that they need to resolve their issues. Fortunately, there are a lot of ways to build leadership skills, including working with a mentor. Developing strong communication skills is another. This includes using electronic communication effectively. Public service organizations depend on a range of programs and technologies to run smoothly, so acquiring basic computer skills is part of the preparation for a public service career.

What you will learn in this unit?

- Apply people skills to grasp opportunities and manage conflicts in a positive and constructive manner.
- Employ critical thinking skills independently and in teams to solve problems and make decisions.
- Identify and document workplace performance goals and monitor progress toward those goals.
- Conduct technical research to gather information necessary for decision making.
- Employ computer operations applications to access, create, manage, integrate, and store information.

Unit 5: Rules and Regulations

Regulations are used to check the conduct of both the government and the individuals who help society. One of the most important regulations is the Freedom of Information Act, which provides individuals access to public records. Although the government regulates many aspects of society, it's important to remember that society is ultimately responsible for monitoring the government. There are some limitations to what government can be forced to reveal, but this act is designed to keep government processes transparent. Public agencies also often have a lot of personal information at their disposal, so part of working in public service is keeping these records safe and secure. Regulations also protect the environment. Without them—and the public service employees who create and enforce them—there would be little protection for natural resources. Fortunately, there are many careers in public service for those who want to monitor and manage these resources.

What you will learn in this unit?

- Maintain thorough familiarity with public information requirements.
- Explain policy background and reasons to persons denied access to certain public information.
- Establish reliable controls to prevent unauthorized access to or release of privileged information.
- Describe the role of federal, state, and local regulatory agencies.
- Define the concepts of environmental planning, resource conservation, pollution prevention and control, and geographic information systems (GIS) in resource management.

Principles of Public Service Midterm Exam

- Review information acquired and mastered from this course up to this point.
- Take a course exam based on material from the first five units in this course (Note: You will be able to open this exam only one time.)

Unit 6: Ethics in Public Service

Having ethics, or morals, is an important part of working in public service. Because so much trust is placed in public agencies, it's particularly damaging to their reputation when employees

make poor ethical choices. One area where public service workers need to be particularly mindful of potential ethical issues is the awarding of public service contracts. Because agencies often need to bring in outside expertise, they need fair and transparent bidding processes to determine who gets the work. Giving public service contracts to private business can be a win-win for both the agency and the private business.

What you will learn in this unit?

- Evaluate and justify decisions based on ethical reasoning.
- Identify and explain personal and long-term consequences of unethical or illegal behaviors in the workplace.
- Assist departmental staff to fulfill procurement requirements.
- Determine means of public announcements to get vendor interest and bids from qualified sources.
- Manage an evaluation process to ensure each bid, proposal, or offer is evaluated completely in terms of all relevant and ethical criteria.

Unit 7: Communication and Health

Communication is an important part of public service. This is true when dealing with members of the public one on one or when trying to get information out to an entire community. Having some basic customer service skills can make both kinds of communication easier. When communicating about public health, it is particularly important to get the message right. Because the public needs to know when new diseases emerge or public health threats are on the horizon, many of those in public service will be responsible for getting these messages across. Both as public service employees and as members of the public, those working in public service need to be mindful of health and safety regulations to do their job of protecting society. Being able to handle basic emergencies or give first aid when needed can help public service workers handle most emergencies.

What you will learn in this unit?

- Design, develop, and deliver formal and informal presentations using appropriate media to engage and inform diverse audiences.
- Exhibit public relations skills that aid in achieving customer satisfaction.
- Describe personal and job site safety rules and regulations that maintain safe and healthy work environments.
- Create a disaster plan and an emergency response plan.
- Distinguish between fact and myth about the transmission and treatment of diseases caused by blood-borne pathogens.

Unit 8: Taking Care of People

Public service requires thinking about the future, and education is an important part of ensuring that society will thrive. Dedicated teachers and administrators do all they can to make sure that young people have the skills that they need to enter the workforce. For those who love working

with youth, a variety of careers in education is available. Whereas educators look out for students' intellectual development, social workers do their best to make sure that every child grows up safe and healthy. By connecting those in need with social services, social workers provide a safety net for individuals and families struggling to maintain an acceptable standard of living. They can help them deal with addiction or get out of an abusive situation. By looking out for everybody, social workers also play an important role in building a society that takes care of all.

What you will learn in this unit?

- Discuss careers in educational services.
- Describe the career opportunities of the paraprofessional teacher aid and the regulations governing those in that occupation.
- Discuss careers in social services.
- Define the concepts of child abuse, child neglect, spousal abuse, and dependency.
- Identify the skills, training, and education needed for a career in social services.

Unit 9: Public Safety Careers

Many of those in public service will spend their days keeping the public safe. This is particularly true of those who are first on the scene when emergencies occur. Public service workers not only provide emergency medical care but also respond to local and national disasters. Whether it's a brutal storm or a terrorist attack, public service workers have a plan to handle the situation. Police and medical workers are often on the front lines of these emergencies, and there are several career options in both of these fields. Protecting society from crime does not end with police officers; they depend upon an entire justice system to make sure that those accused of wrongdoing have a fair process. Those who dedicate their careers to public safety ensure that society runs smoothly.

What you will learn in this unit?

- Discuss careers in public safety (EMS, communications, civil defense).
- Describe municipal, county, and state emergency management agencies and their roles.
- Investigate career opportunities upon completion of criminal justice operations.
- Identify the skills, training, and education needed for a career in the criminal justice system.
- Identify the skills, training, and education needed for a career in firefighting.

Unit 10: Careers that Keep It Moving

Firefighters do more than save lives; they also protect land and property. They represent just one of the many careers available in fire safety. People in these careers share a desire to keep the public safe. Civil engineering is also an important part of public service. Without professionals like city planners working to make cities efficient, it would be difficult for cities to expand and grow. Transportation is another important category in public service. Without public service workers imagining bustling cities and considering how to best accommodate the movement of

residents, getting around the neighborhood and the nation would be tough. As in all aspects of public service, a lot of planning is involved in transportation and the rules and regulations to keep it safe.

What you will learn in this unit?

- Discuss careers and opportunities in civil engineering (urban planners, surveyors, draftsmen).
- Define the concepts of zoning board, allocation, planning, geological survey, and geographic information systems (GIS) in urban planning.
- Discuss careers in transportation services.
- Define the concept of public transportation.
- Identify the skills, training, and education needed for a career in regulatory services.

Principles of Public Service Final Exam

- Review information acquired and mastered from this course up to this point.
- Take a course exam based on material from units six to ten in this course – the last five units. (Note: You will be able to open this exam only one time.)

© eDynamic Learning Inc. | All Rights Reserved.