

Frequently Asked Questions



What is a polygraph examination?

This is an interview and recording of physical responses to determine how a person (the Examinee) reacts while being asked a series of questions. The process is transparent and the equipment is modern. It is not what you may have seen in television and movies. There is no trickery.

How accurate is a polygraph exam?

There are several polygraph approaches and applications, and polygraph accuracy is not the same for all of them. In a 2003 meta-analysis conducted by the US National Research Council, median accuracy was placed between 85% and 90% for event-specific testing or testing on single issues.

How long does a polygraph exam take?

It takes 2-3 hours. This includes an interview on biographical and health information; a discussion of the issues, questions, and process; a practice test; and the actual test. The charts are analyzed and the results reported to the examinee before they leave the exam room. Follow up reporting can be done via email and/or a written report.

What types of questions are asked?

Polygraph exams use a number of questions, some of which are relevant to the topic at hand. “Did you [do whatever]...” is an example of a relevant question. One to three of these relevant questions are ideal, four is the absolute maximum. The other questions guide your reactions.

Examinees (other than court-ordered or pre employment ones) are welcome to prepare their own questions, which will be edited for the actual procedure. For example, there cannot be any compound questions that are linked with conjunctions such as “and” or “or”. Questions about emotions or what someone contemplates they will do in the future cannot be included. Questions can only cover one topic (e.g., fidelity) and cannot span multiple topics. Sex offender questions are specified by a therapist or probation officer in advance. Examinees (other than court-ordered or pre-employment ones) are welcome to prepare their own questions, which will be edited for the actual procedure. For example, there cannot be any compound questions that are linked with conjunctions such as “and” or “or”. Questions about emotions or what someone contemplates they will do in the future cannot be included. Questions can only cover one topic (e.g., fidelity) and cannot span multiple topics. Sex offender questions are specified by a therapist or probation officer in advance.

Do you conduct infidelity exams?

Yes. These usually mean discussing and asking questions regarding sexual activities or behavior. As a result, be prepared to discuss sexual issues in a clinical manner. The examiner is trained on conducting Post-Conviction Sex-Offender Testing, so he works with clinical psychologists and sex addiction therapists to obtain information necessary to identify sexual and deviant behaviors. His interest in sexual issues is strictly clinical and not an inappropriate intrusion into your personal life. You are very strongly urged to conduct this type of polygraph in conjunction to your working with a trained counselor/therapist/coach, not on your own.

Both parties involved in a dispute are welcome to be present during the question formulation process. However, if there is hostility between the parties, the examiner prefers you not be there together.

The examiner will not ask “Do you love your spouse?” (because that’s an emotion and love can be defined in various ways), however a spouse may be asked if s/he has lied when s/he stated they loved you, for example. A spouse may also be asked if s/he has already been taking steps to leave someone.

Do you conduct exams in cases involving allegations of sexual assault or abuse, including minors?

Yes but only on the accused and only through your private attorney. Examiners are obligated by law to report allegations of sexual assault or abuse to minors discovered during polygraph testing to the authorities. The only waiver to this requirement is if performing the examination at the request of an attorney, in which case, the attorney-client privilege applies and the polygraph examination is protected from disclosure.

If needed, you may wish to consult the Texas Criminal Defense Lawyer’s Association or similar website. Scroll down to “Need A Lawyer” to find one in your area. Then have your attorney hire the polygrapher.

Do you test pre-teens, teens, or adolescents?

Yes, if certain conditions are met. Anyone under the age of 18 must have written parental or guardian consent before they can be tested. The traditional minimum age for testing is at least 12 years-of-age.

However, the age of the pre-teen or adolescent is not as important as their maturity, so it is important for the parents and examiner to determine if the individual is mature enough to clearly differentiate between right and wrong. If it can be established that the individual is mature enough and can describe these differences, and the parent or guardian provides written consent, the examiner may agree to perform the examination.

What if I’m nervous or stressed?

Being nervous is a normal reaction to taking a polygraph. Nonetheless, once a person arrives for testing they establish a new “baseline” of stress and the examiner is able to account for that new stress level. It is practical to still differentiate between “normal” stress and the physiological reactions that are exhibited when someone is being deceptive.

The examiner will treat you with respect. He will not antagonize or accuse anyone. The pre-test interview is a lengthy discussion of the issues, questions, and process. Most people usually calm down significantly after talking starts, so there is no need to worry.

It is important to inform the examiner if you have had a significant life-changing experience within 24 hours of your polygraph examination. For example, the examiner needs to know if you just came from an argument, were served with divorce papers, if a relative just died, if a favorite pet is missing, or any other situation that may be causing you abnormal stress or distraction. If that is the case, you should consider rescheduling your appointment.

What if I’m pregnant, have a serious heart condition, or other serious physical issue?

If pregnant, first get an approval letter from a physician allowing you to take the exam. If you have a serious heart condition or other serious physical issue, consider also getting an approval letter from a physician allowing you to take the exam. If you have any questions please ask prior to scheduling, as deposits are non refundable more than 48 hours out

What do I do if I’m taking a medication?

Please do not stop taking any existing medications, and do not start taking any new medications, within 24 hours of the examination. This applies to prescription or over-the-counter drugs.

Unless this is a pre employment exam, please bring with you a list of any medications that you are taking, including the name of the medication, the amount of the dosage, and the frequency of usage.

The use of recreational drugs (marijuana, etc.) or alcohol on the day of the examination will be cause to suspend the examination. Do not use illegal or recreational drugs for at least 24 hours before being tested.

Can polygraph results be used in court proceedings?

The short answer is yes. Various entities may use exam results in court proceedings in different ways, including but not limited to:

- ✓ Police Agencies: Some law enforcement agencies accept the results of private polygraphs, but some don't because they want to perform their own tests.
- ✓ Child Protective Services: CPS may accept polygraph results done by either private examiners or police examiners as long as the examiner is certified to conduct sex offender polygraphs in child abuse cases.
- ✓ Courts: Most courts in Texas use polygraph testing as a condition of probation for sex offenders and others on probation, such as alcohol-related convictions. Courts may use the results to determine if the probationer stays on probation or goes to jail for violating conditions of probation.
- ✓ Grand Jury: Polygraph results can be used in Grand Jury proceedings because the standard of proof is "reasonable suspicion" that a crime has been committed.
- ✓ District Attorneys: Some use polygraph as a tool to determine whether to indict someone, or whether to present the case to a Grand Jury.
- ✓ Civil Cases: Polygraph results are admissible in civil proceedings (divorces, contested wills, and lawsuits).
- ✓ Criminal Trials: Polygraph results may be admissible in criminal proceedings if the defense attorney, the prosecution, and the judge all agree in advance.

How do I schedule an exam?

Everything is done by appointment. Walk-ins are not permitted. The examiner is usually booked several days out, so that means he can usually perform your examination within a few days. Our online real-time scheduling is awesome; you select from when you can fit it into your schedule!

What do I bring to my exam appointment?

Please bring an official photo ID. The examiner will photograph your ID and you, and ask for your signature and fingerprint, so he can prove that it was you who took the examination.

Please do not bring children to the appointment. We cannot conduct an exam if children are present.

What does an exam cost?

The base fee is listed on the scheduling pages. The rate varies by exam type.

Deposits vary by exam type. Deposits are done via credit / debit card. In person payment may be via cash, debit, and credit cards (Visa, Mastercard, American Express, Discover) or contactless payments (Apple Pay, Samsung Pay, Android Pay). The balance must be paid in full upon arrival. Sex offender exams have no deposit; Pre Employment exams are paid the first time by the employer.

The examinee needs to arrive on-time for scheduled appointment. An appointment is considered a "No Show" when the client fails to arrive within 15 minutes of their scheduled appointment without notifying the examiner that they will be late.

Any of the following will result in the complete forfeiture of a deposit:

- (i) Failure of the examinee to arrive on time for the scheduled appointment;
- (ii) Failure to pay the remaining balance at the time of the appointment;
- (iii) Failure to reschedule the appointment at least 48 hours in advance (a new deposit will be required to reschedule the appointment); or
- (iv) Failure of the examinee to show up for the scheduled appointment.

What are the examiner's credentials?

- ✓ Member of numerous professional polygraph associations to facilitate continuing education
- ✓ Computerized psychophysiological tools and graduated from an accredited training school
- ✓ Graduate of an approved Post-conviction Sex Offender Testing course
- ✓ Seventeen years of experience as a state police officer
- ✓ Professional approach and rapid unbiased result reports; easy online appointment process

What else should I know?

I know your issue is a serious concern. I believe that every polygraph, regardless of the outcome, affects people's lives. As a result, I do everything possible to give the examinee every opportunity to pass. This way, if the examinee fails the examination, I can be assured it was not because of something I failed to do, but rather, it was because the examinee was untruthful during the examination.

/s/ Michael Mitchell

RENDERING AN UNBIASED OPINION

WWW.PPoT-tx.COM | Michael@PPoT-tx.com | (512) 66-TRUTH or (512) 668-7884

Access this
document
direct

