

Polygraph Standards

What we should be doing for the sake of the profession

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DISCLAIMER

This presentation represents my thoughts on the topic. It does not represent the opinion of AAPP nor APA.

American Association of Police Polygraphists and American Polygraph Association

- Two largest polygraph resources
- Any evaluators would look here for standards
- Standards change – depending on:
 - Research
 - Case law
 - Best practices
 - State laws

Examiner

- AAPP
 - “Members conducting PDD examinations should meet the minimum initial training and continuing educational requirements, including attendance at one professional polygraph seminar on a yearly basis in order to maintain and improve their professional competency as defined in the AAPP Constitution.”
- APA
 - “a person who meets the training and education requirements as set forth in the APA Bylaws.”

Examiner

- Education
 - Most organizations require graduation from an APA accredited or AAPP recognized school
 - State licensing requirements
 - Age
 - Education level
 - Criminal History
- Internship
 - Employer
 - State licensing
 - Organization membership

Examiner (continued)

- Licensing
- Continuing Education
- Membership in Polygraph Organizations
 - Credibility
 - STANDARDS

Preparation

- AAPP
 - “Prior to any examination, member examiners should consult with investigators, review the circumstances, case facts and relevant documents in order to identify the PDD target issues.”
- APA
 - “Prior to an examination, the examiner shall dedicate sufficient time to identify and discuss the examination issues and potential problem areas.”

Preparation

- Spend *enough* time to talk with the client or investigator
- Learn about the case under investigation
 - Is it a testable issue
 - Target
 - RELEVANT ISSUES
- Learn about examinee
 - Criminal History
 - Family
 - Employment history
 - COMPARISON ISSUES

Test Location

- AAPP
 - “Member examiners should strive to conduct all PDD examinations in settings that are sufficiently free from distractions that could interfere with the examinee's attention to the test stimuli.”
- APA
 - “The testing environment should be reasonably free from distractions.”

Test Location

- Limitations
 - Department
 - Afterthought
- Visual distractions
 - Eyes closed test
 - Positioning of examinee
- Audio distractions
 - Headphones
 - Computer voice synthesis

Test Location (continued)

- Climate distractions
 - Blanket
 - Oven mitt
 - Towel
 - Hand warmer

Recording

- AAPP
 - “The polygraph examination should be recorded by audio or audio/visual means in its entirety, from the onset of the pretest interview through the completion of the posttest review, unless prohibited by law, rule or regulation. The recording should be continuous, and any stops or pauses should be explained on the recording. All PDD examination records and recordings shall be retained and maintained for a minimum of one year or longer as may be required by law.”
- APA
 - “An audio or audio-video recording of all phases of the exam shall be maintained as part of the examination files, consistent with agency policy, regulation or law, for a minimum of one (1) year.”

Recording (continued)

- Audio/Video
 - Both AAPP and APA recommend keeping recordings at least one (1) year
 - Retention rules
 - IA
 - Pre-Employment
 - Criminal/Investigative
 - Both yield to:
 - Law
 - Agency policy, regulation, or rule

Pre-Test

- AAPP
 - “...Verify the correct identity of the examinee to the degree practicable.”
 - “Obtain the written voluntary consent of the examinee prior to testing...”
 - “Assess the mental and physical fitness for testing...”
 - “Allow the examinee sufficient time to fully explain his/her position as related to the target issues to be tested.”
 - “Ensure the examinee and the examiner have the same understanding of every test question.”
 - “Spend adequate time to orient the examinee to the PDD instrumentation, examination process, and the expectation or requirement for cooperation during testing.”

Pre-Test (continued)

- APA
 - “The examiner shall obtain information sufficient to identify the examinee.”
 - “The examiner shall obtain the informed consent of the examinee prior to testing. It is recommended that the informed consent of the examinee be obtained after an overview of the polygraph process...”
 - “The examiner shall review all test questions prior to recording the physiological responses of the examinee.”

Pre-Test (continued)

- Identify examinee
- Informed consent
 - Recommended AFTER the Overview
 - Different consent forms for types of examination
- Suitability
 - Diagnostic
 - Pre-Employment
- Explanation of Polygraph Instrument and sensors

Pre-Test (continued)

- Allow examinee to explain what they know about incident
- Review all test questions
 - “What does that question mean to you?”
- Acquaintance Test

Instrumentation

- AAPP

- “A minimum of two channels of respiratory activity shall be simultaneously recorded: one thoracic and one abdominal.”
- “A minimum of one channel of electrodermal activity, via resistance or conductance, shall be recorded.”
- “A minimum of one channel of relative blood pressure (cardiovascular) activity shall be recorded.”
- “Additional channels may be recorded...”
- “Only data channels supported by published research shall be used for the formulation of an opinion.”

Instrumentation (continued)

- APA

- “Respiration patterns recorded by pneumograph components. Thoracic and abdominal patterns should be recorded separately, using two pneumograph components;”
- “Electrodermal activity reflecting relative changes in the conductance or resistance of electrical current by the epidermal tissue;”
- “Cardiovascular activity including changes in relative blood pressure, pulse rate, and pulse amplitude;”
- “A seat activity sensor.”
- “Other physiological data may also be recorded during testing, but may not be used to formulate probabilistic or categorical conclusions unless their validity is supported by replicated and published research.”

Instrumentation (continued)

- Minimums
 - Two (2) properly functioning Pneumograph sensors
 - Thoracic
 - Abdominal
 - Electrodermal activity sensor
 - Cardiovascular sensor
 - Movement sensor

Testing

- AAPP
 - “Questions should be presented in such a manner as to not influence the examinee's responses.”
 - “Member examiners should make and maintain a continuous recording of the data produced during the in-test phase.
 - Question intervals for deception tests shall allow for a reasonable recovery and stimulus onset to stimulus onset should not be less than 20 seconds...”
 - “Examiners should collect a sufficient amount of physiological data suitable for evaluation in compliance with the format utilized.”

Testing (continued)

- APA
 - “A member polygraph examiner shall use evidence-based validated testing techniques.”
 - “...a testing technique shall be considered valid if supported by research conducted in accordance with the APA’s research standards.”
 - “Examiners shall conduct an acquaintance test for all diagnostic, evidentiary, paired-testing, initial screening, and initial investigative examinations.”
 - “Questions used in the assessment of truth and deception shall be followed by time intervals of not less than 20 seconds from question onset to question onset.”
 - “Examinations shall be scheduled for not less than 90 minutes. A member polygraph examiner shall not conduct more than five examinations of any type in one day.”

Testing (continued)

- Validated techniques
- Properly formulated Questions
- Proper format presentations

Test Data Analysis

- AAPP
 - “The member examiner should evaluate the test data using a numerical evaluation method for which there are known error and accuracy rates reported in published and replicated research.”
 - “Examiners should maintain all records of test data analysis in accordance with ASTM standards or their agency policy.”
 - “Examiners should collect a sufficient amount of physiological data suitable for evaluation in compliance with the format utilized.”

Test Data Analysis (continued)

- APA

- “Examiners shall render a conclusion for each examination based on a method of data analysis that is validated in a manner consistent with section 1.1.7 in these Standards”
 - “Test data analysis in polygraph refers to any structured method, whether manual or automated, for the evaluation and interpretation of the recorded physiological data in terms of probabilistic margins of uncertainty and/or categorical test decisions concerning the examinee’s truthfulness”
- “Examiners may suspend judgement when there is countervailing information or an identified external factor that reduces confidence in a decision that would otherwise be based on the polygraph data.”
- “For evidentiary examinations, an examiner shall report the probabilistic results for the technique and/or the rendered opinion.”

Test Data Analysis (continued)

- Collect QUALITY data
 - Tracings sizes
 - Clean up the cardo tracing
 - Score the pneumograph tracing
- Learn another Validated Scoring Method
 - 3 Position
 - 7 Position
 - ESS
 - OSS

Post-Test

- AAPP
 - “All suitable physiological data shall be evaluated and considered when formulating an opinion.”
- APA
 - “Examiners shall render a conclusion for each examination based on a method of data analysis that is validated in a manner consistent with section 1.1.7 in these Standards...”

Post-Test (continued)

- Before the Psychophysiological Detection of Deception Examination
 - Good Suspect

- After the PDD Examination
 - ?

QUESTIONS