

NCARB PDD Exam Questions - Easy Way To Prepare [2026]

NCARB PRACTICE EXAM QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

A developer hires an architecture firm to design a new apartment building. The firm completes construction documents and a building permit is issued. The firm will provide CA services at a rate of \$200 per hour for the principal and \$150 per hour for the project manager. As the firm starts CA, the owner asks for a not-to-exceed fee based on the following:

-Twenty shop drawings, which the project manager will handle at an average of three hours per review.

-Three site visits, which the principal will handle at an average of four hours per site visit.

The firm includes a 10% allowance for unknowns.

What should the not-to-exceed fee be?

A. \$11,400

B. \$12,540

C. \$13,800

D. \$15,240 - Answers :CORRECT RESPONSE

\$12,540

CALCULATIONS

1. Shop drawing review: \$150 per hour (project manager) x 3 hours per review x 20 shop drawings = \$9,000

2. Site visits: \$200 per hour (principal) x 4 hours per visit x 3 visits = \$2,400

3. \$9,000 (shop drawing review) + \$2,400 (site visits) = \$11,400

4. \$11,400 + 10% (allowance for unknowns) = \$12,540

An architecture firm is updating their rules for the proper dimensioning of their architectural drawings. They want to provide their construction personnel with clear and unambiguous aspects of general dimensioning.

Which of the following rules should the firm use? Check the four that apply.

A. Avoid notes on plans when dimensional control of an element is unnecessary so that the lack of information isn't viewed as an error or omission.

B. Provide actual dimension strings even when there is an opportunity to describe an element with a note such as "align."

C. Provide critical dimensions for things that are important in location or that must have a controlled placement.

D. Dimension corridor partitions from the corridor side of the partition with a clear egress width.

E. Dimension toilet room drywall partitions from the toilet room side of the partition.

F. Avoid the use of fractions smaller than "1/8" anywhere on floor - Answers :B. Provide critical dimensions for things that are important in location or that must have a controlled placement.

This is a general basis for all dimensioning in architectural documentation.

C. Dimension corridor partitions from the corridor side of the partition with a clear egress width.

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NCARB PDD Exam Syllabus Topics:

Topic	Details
Topic 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Construction Documentation: This section of the exam measures skills of Project Architects and addresses the creation and management of project documentation. Candidates are expected to demonstrate knowledge of documenting building design and site features, preparing detailed architectural drawings, and applying industry standards to produce a coordinated set of construction documents. The section also includes understanding how project changes impact documentation and how to communicate these updates effectively to both the design team and the client.:
Topic 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Codes & Regulations: This section of the exam measures skills of Building Code Specialists and examines how codes and regulations apply at a detailed level during documentation. Candidates are expected to demonstrate knowledge of compliance with the International Building Code (IBC) as well as other specialty regulations, as well as how to interpret and apply these standards to ensure design and documentation meet legal and safety requirements.

Topic 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction Cost: This section of the exam measures the skills of Construction Managers and focuses on the financial side of project execution. It evaluates the ability to analyze construction cost estimates to confirm that they align with project design intent and budgetary constraints. Although this is the smallest section, it is critical for ensuring projects remain feasible and economically viable.
Topic 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Manual & Specifications: This section of the exam measures the skills of Specifications Writers and emphasizes the importance of developing documentation that goes beyond drawings. Candidates must understand how to identify and prioritize elements needed to prepare, maintain, and refine both the project manual and project specifications. It also assesses the ability to align and coordinate these specifications with the construction documents to ensure consistency and accuracy.
Topic 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integration of Building Materials & Systems: This section of the exam measures the skills of Architectural Designers and focuses on the ability to resolve and integrate various building systems into cohesive project goals. It covers analyzing architectural systems and technologies, determining the size of structural, mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems, and incorporating specialty systems such as acoustics, lighting, security, and communications. It also evaluates the ability to detail how multiple building systems work together and to coordinate across disciplines to achieve a unified design.

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NCARB ARE 5.0 Project Development and Documentation Exam Sample Questions (Q12-Q17):

NEW QUESTION # 12

Which document is the most appropriate location for specifying the finish material for casework?

- A. Project Manual - Division 06
- B. Construction Drawings
- C. General Conditions
- D. Outline Specifications

Answer: A

Explanation:

Division 06 (Wood, Plastics, and Composites) of the Project Manual contains detailed specifications for finish carpentry and casework materials. This aligns with ARE Objective 2.1: Evaluate project manual sections for technical accuracy.

NEW QUESTION # 13

A family-owned apple farm in the Upper Midwest is taking advantage of a change in the local zoning code that added a new Agri-Tourism class in the existing farm zone. This allows the Owner to build a new facility on their existing site. The building will be open to the public and include a brewery, distillery, tap room, and market. The architect is ready to submit the drawings to the Owner for the 50% construction documents review.

To accommodate a compressed construction schedule, the Owner will be utilizing a design-build process. The Contractor has submitted the Pre-Engineered Metal Building (PEMB) shop drawings to the Architect for review, due to the lead time on this critical path item. Once construction begins, farming operations must be able to continue uninterrupted.

Key project information includes:

* Brewing and distilling will operate year-round.

- * Brewery will initially include four fermenting tanks. Owner has requested space for at least two additional tanks. Potential expansion will be based on future sales.
- * Distillery will produce 16% alcohol, which is classified as a flammable liquid. Fire separations are required.
- * Tap Room is designed with seating for 300 people, not including exterior patio seating. It will have views to the working orchards and the historic buildings on site.
- * Tap Room is scheduled to be open from August through November. Owner would like options to extend operating dates based on popularity.
- * The Market area will feature local farm products and is not conditioned.
- * Entire building will be fully sprinklered.
- * Selected building materials are low-maintenance, as requested by the Owner, for durability and to reflect the nature of a working farm.
- * Mechanical and electrical systems will be hung from the building structure. These loads are included in PEMB shop drawings.
- * Public water and sewer is not available at the Project Site.
- * Occupancy sensors are included to reduce utility costs and achieve energy conservation requirements.

The following resources are available for your reference:

- * Architectural Drawings, including plans, elevations, sections, and schedules
- * Consultant Drawings, including structural, HVAC, power distribution, and plumbing
- * PEMB Shop Drawings
- * Design and Construction Schedule
- * Specification Excerpts, showing relevant spec sections
- * IBC and ADA Excerpts, showing relevant code and accessibility sections
- * After reviewing the documents, the architect discovers a coordination issue in the corridor.

Which modification is required?

- A. Relocate supply and return air diffusers.
- B. Add exit sign at door number 15.
- C. Add access panel for shut-off valves.

Answer: C

Explanation:

At 50% CDs with early PEMB coordination and compressed schedule, typical cross-discipline clashes in corridors involve above-ceiling valves/dampers that lack required access from a public space. Plumbing and mechanical codes require accessible, labeled access panels for isolation/shut-off valves (and similar devices) located in concealed spaces so they can be serviced without disrupting operations-critical here because farm work must continue during construction/operation.

Exit sign at door #15 (A) depends on egress analysis; not a generic coordination issue.

Relocate diffusers (B) is a comfort/layout decision, not a compliance coordination issue unless they conflict with lights/sprinklers.

PDD refs: IMC/IPC provisions for access to valves and equipment in concealed spaces; Division 08/10 access panels; ARE 5.0 PDD-Coordination of MEP with architectural ceilings and corridors.

NEW QUESTION # 14

Temporary shoring of a masonry wall should remain in place until what point?

- A. Lateral bracing connections are complete
- B. Mortar joints are struck
- C. Horizontal reinforcing is installed
- D. Foundations are backfilled

Answer: A

Explanation:

(PDD) Study Guide References:

Temporary shoring in masonry construction supports walls until they gain sufficient stability. It should remain in place until: The wall is laterally braced or tied back to a stable structure to resist wind and other lateral loads.

Mortar may have hardened but shoring removal depends on the overall stability.

Horizontal reinforcing and backfilling provide some support but do not replace lateral bracing.

Thus, temporary shoring should remain until all lateral bracing connections are complete, ensuring the wall's stability.

Reference:

NCARB ARE 5.0 Review Manual, Construction Methods chapter

Masonry construction standards and OSHA guidelines on temporary shoring

NEW QUESTION # 15

Given the information below, which of the following is the cost of 1,850 sq. ft. of brick veneer?

- * Cost of brick - \$500 per 1,000 brick
- * Cost of masonry cement, sand, etc. - \$160 per 1,000 brick
- * Cost of labor - \$675 per 1,000 brick
- * 680 bricks per 100 sq. ft.
- * 5% waste of material

- A. \$16,794
- B. **\$17,634**
- C. \$19,732
- D. \$15,520

Answer: B

NEW QUESTION # 16

Coordination of a motorized movable partition used to subdivide a gymnasium should include which of the following?

- A. Fire protection engineer and the electrical engineer
- B. Structural engineer and the mechanical engineer
- C. Fire protection engineer and the furniture and equipment consultant
- D. **Structural engineer and the electrical engineer**

Answer: D

Explanation:

A motorized movable partition used to subdivide a gymnasium requires coordination with:

The structural engineer: to ensure the partition loads are supported, especially if the system is suspended or has track supports.

The electrical engineer: to provide power for the motorized operation, controls, and safety systems.

Mechanical and fire protection engineers are typically less involved unless the partition affects HVAC zones or fire separation requirements, and furniture consultants typically do not deal with structural or electrical coordination.

References:

NCARB ARE 5.0 Review Manual, Building Systems and Coordination chapter

Manufacturer installation guidelines for motorized partitions

MEP coordination best practices

NEW QUESTION # 17

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