CHAPTER 1

DEPARTMENTAL EXAMINATIONS

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CHAPTER 1

DEPARTMENTAL EXAMINATIONS

1. GENERAL. The California Department of Human Resources (CalHR) maintains central authority over the administration of civil service examinations. State agencies now conduct their own examinations under the decentralized testing program.

2. EXAMINATION ADMINISTRATION RESPONSIBILITY. Examinations are administered by the Selection Standards and Examinations Section (SSES), Examination Services (ES).

   a. Examination Services staff are responsible for the following examination tasks:

      (1) Yearly examination planning.

      (2) Conducting job analyses, developing examinations, and securing proctors.

      (3) Creating examination announcements, reviewing applications, and performing minimum qualifications (MQ) evaluations.

      (4) Examination administration and scoring, establishment of eligibility lists, and notifying candidates of examination results.

3. DISTRIBUTION OF EXAMINATION BULLETINS.

   a. Examination bulletins are available on the CHP Internet website under CHP Careers at www.chp.ca.gov and on the CalHR website at www.calcareers.ca.gov.

   b. A Communications Network (Comm-Net) message is sent to “All Commands” announcing the release of each examination bulletin, except for Public Safety Dispatcher, CHP, and Public Safety Operator, CHP, examinations. This procedure is meant to alert interested persons of the examination. The Comm-Net message and the examination bulletin are released on the same date.

4. FILING OF EXAMINATION APPLICATIONS.

   a. To compete in an examination, a candidate must complete and submit an application as instructed in the examination bulletin. An application may not be filed until the bulletin has been released, except in the case of an employee who is working in a classification on a Temporary Authorization (TAU) basis. The

application filed for the TAU appointment will automatically be processed for the first examination scheduled following the TAU appointment.

b. Applications for Examination. The following applications shall be used to file for departmental examinations:

(1) STD. 678, Examination/Employment Application. A completed STD. 678 is required for all state civil service examinations, except for Cadet, CHP, examination or any other examination bulletin that specifies a specialized application requirement. The STD. 678 must be submitted using one of the following methods:

(a) Applications may be submitted by mail or in person. Upon receipt, SSES shall immediately date stamp the front side of the first page of the application with the date received and forwarded to ES. In the event SSES receives a personally delivered application, the applicant will be provided a photocopy of the front page of the application bearing the date stamp as proof of timely submission.

(b) Applications submitted electronically via CalCareers shall be accessed by SSES through the Examination and Certification Online System (ECOS).

(c) Faxed or e-mailed applications **will not** be accepted.

(d) A separate STD 678 must be filed for each examination.

(2) Required supplemental documents must be submitted as part of the application process.

(3) Cadet, CHP, applications shall initially be submitted electronically via the designated CHP online application portal (refer to paragraph 3.a.) during open filing periods. The STD. 678 shall be required prior to taking the written examination.

c. Final Filing Date. Applications must be postmarked no later than the final filing date posted on the examination bulletin to be considered. Applications postmarked, personally delivered, or received via interoffice mail after the final filing date **will not** be accepted or considered. Applicants are responsible for submitting complete applications on time and for ensuring envelopes are postmarked, when applicable, to be considered.

(1) Mobile Barcodes. Dates printed on mobile barcodes, such as the quick response codes available at the United States Postal Services, are not considered postmark dates for the purpose of determining timely filing of an application.

(2) Domestic Return Receipt. It is not recommended to use tracking postcard PS Form 3811, Domestic Return Receipt, as this may cause a delay in the processing of an application.

(3) Interoffice Mailing. It is not recommended to use the interoffice mail system to send time-sensitive mail, such as an application, as this may cause a delay in the processing/receipt of an application. Dates on a route slip (CHP 58, Headquarters Route Slip, or CHP 58B, Field Route Slip) are not considered a postmark date for the purpose of determining timely filing of an application. Applications submitted via interoffice mail must be physically received in SSES by the final filing date to be considered timely.

5. TESTS AND CERTIFICATES FOR PROFICIENCY IN TYPING. Prior to being hired from the eligibility list, applicants for entry-level classifications which have a typing requirement, must present an official typing certificate which meets or exceeds the typing standard. In accordance with CalHR policy, typing certificates are valid for four years from the date of issue. All typing standards are based on net typing speed. Typing certificates for promotional positions may be required by the hiring authority.

6. ADDITIONAL POINTS ADDED TO EXAMINATION SCORES.

a. Seniority Points. In promotional examinations for CHP uniformed classifications, each competitor is allowed an additional credit of one-quarter of a point for each full year served in the next lower rank than that for which the examination is given. Time in rank shall be computed from the date of appointment in the present rank to the final filing date stated on the examination bulletin.

7. VETERANS' PREFERENCE. An applicant who has veteran status, as described below, is entitled to Veterans' Preference in an entrance examination. An entrance examination, as defined by law, is any open competitive examination.

a. Definition of a Veteran. Any person who has served full time in the armed forces in time of national emergency or state military emergency, or during any expedition of the armed forces, and who has been discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable.

b. Definition of a Disabled Veteran. A disabled veteran is any veteran who is currently declared by the United States Veterans Administration to be 10 percent or more disabled as a result of service in the armed forces. A "100 percent disabled veteran" means any veteran who is currently declared by the United States Veterans Administration to be 100 percent disabled as a result of service. Proof of disability shall be deemed conclusive if it is on record with the United States Veterans Administration.

c. Veterans' Preference will be awarded to any veteran, widow or widower of a veteran, or spouse of a 100 percent disabled veteran who achieves a passing score on an entrance examination. All individuals awarded Veterans' Preference will be ranked in the top rank of the resulting eligibility list.

d. Directions for claiming Veterans' Preference are provided on the CalHR-1093, Veterans' Preference for Examinations, which are available on the CalHR website or from the test proctors at the time of the examination. Temporarily disabled veterans must establish their eligibility for each open entrance examination in which they participate. Totally and permanently disabled veterans, as well as nondisabled veterans, are only required to apply for Veterans' Preference once.

8. ELIGIBILITY TO TAKE PROMOTIONAL EXAMINATIONS.

a. Employees Who Move from One Agency to Another. In accordance with Title 2, Section 235 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR), employees who have moved from one agency or subdivision to another agency or subdivision without a break in service may participate in a promotional examination for the agency from which the employee has moved while still employed and either: (1) under probationary status, limited-term appointment, or TAU until the employee first attains permanent status in the new agency; (2) under an exempt appointment until the employee no longer has a right to return to civil service status under Section 19141 of the Government Code (GC); (3) under a training assignment conforming to the provisions of Section 19050.8 GC; or (4) under a Career Executive Assignment (CEA).

b. Employees Who Move from One Agency to Another—Administrative, Professional, and Technical Classifications. An employee from another agency or subdivision, who is otherwise eligible, may participate in a promotional exam for administrative, professional, or technical classifications, if the following are met:

(1) The employee had promotional eligibility in the designated agency or subdivision at any time within three years of the date of examination.

(2) The employee has had no subsequent break in state service by resignation, non-disability retirement, or removal for cause.

c. Legislative Employees. Candidates must be current or former employees of the California Legislature for two or more consecutive years, as defined in Section 18990 GC, to apply for promotional examinations or examinations for CEAs, for which the candidate meets the MQs. In evaluating MQs, a person's legislative experience shall be considered state civil service experience in a comparable class which has the same or substantially similar duties and responsibilities as the person's legislative position.

d. Executive Branch. Candidates must be current or former nonelected exempt employees of the Executive Branch for two or more consecutive years, as defined by Section 18992 GC, to apply for promotional examinations or examinations for CEAs, for which the candidate meets the MQs. In evaluating MQs, a person's experience in the exempt position shall be considered state civil service experience in a comparable class which has the same or substantially similar duties and responsibilities as the person's exempt position.

e. Military Veterans. Candidates must be retired from the United States military, honorably discharged from active military duty with a service-connected disability, or honorably discharged from active duty, as defined in Section 18991 GC, to apply for promotional examinations, including examinations for CEAs, for which the candidates meet the MQs. In evaluating MQs, the person's military experience shall be considered state civil service experience in a comparable class which has the same or substantially similar duties and responsibilities as the person's position in the military.

f. Uniformed Classifications. In order for a uniformed employee to be eligible to participate in a promotional examination, the following MQs must be met:

(1) Sergeant, California Highway Patrol. A minimum of 36 months of qualifying pay periods performing the duties of an Officer, CHP, with 24 qualifying pay periods performing enforcement-related duties a majority of the time. Work hours expended during the break-in period do not qualify. Enforcement-related duties includes assignment to marked sedans, motorcycles, Mobile Road Enforcement trucks, bicycles, horseback, and aircraft. Special duty positions which directly support enforcement (e.g., auto theft, commercial facilities, task forces, Multidisciplinary Accident Investigation Team) are considered enforcement related. Any other position which regularly generates enforcement documents is also considered enforcement related.

(2) Lieutenant, California Highway Patrol. Two years of experience performing the duties of a Sergeant, CHP, in the Department of California Highway Patrol.

(3) Captain, California Highway Patrol. Two years of experience performing the duties of a Lieutenant, CHP, in the Department of California Highway Patrol.

(4) Assistant Chief, California Highway Patrol. One year of experience performing the duties of a Captain, CHP, in the Department of California Highway Patrol.

(5) Chief, California Highway Patrol. One year of experience performing the duties of an Assistant Chief, CHP, in the Department of California Highway Patrol. (Applicants who have completed six months of service performing the duties of an Assistant Chief, CHP, will be admitted to the examination, but they must satisfactorily complete one year of experience performing the duties of an Assistant Chief, CHP, before they can be considered eligible for appointment.)

9. USE OF OUT-OF-CLASS EXPERIENCE IN MEETING MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS FOR AN EXAMINATION.

a. Out-of-class experience is work experience gained by the performance of duties outside the concept of the employee's classification of appointment. Under the provisions of Title 2, Section 212 CCR, an employee shall be eligible to receive credit for out-of-class experience in meeting the MQs for a civil service examination. Refer to Chapter 40, Out-of-Class Assignments, of this manual.

b. Examination applicants shall attach a copy of their approved CHP 46, Out-of-Class Assignment, with the current duty statement, proposed duty statement, organizational chart, and justification for the out-of-class assignment, to the application form for any examination for which they are applying. If necessary, further information may be requested by SSES, ES.

c. Employees have a right to appeal the Department's denial of a request to use out-of-class experience for meeting MQs in an examination with State Personnel Board (SPB), Appeals Division.

10. STATE TIME ALLOWED FOR EXAMINATIONS. Refer to provisions of applicable bargaining unit contracts and Chapter 26, Miscellaneous Absences With Pay, of this manual.

11. QUALIFICATIONS APPRAISAL PANEL CHAIRPERSON.

a. A Qualifications Appraisal Panel (QAP) is an oral interview examination. All QAPs shall be administered by a chairperson and one or more State Service Representatives (SSR). In accordance with Title 2, Section 195 CCR, a qualified representative of CalHR must be present on all QAPs to serve as a chairperson on both open and promotional examinations. The chairperson's role is to represent CalHR and to ensure a fair and impartial interview. The role of the SSR is to represent the Department's interests and to provide technical knowledge of the classification being examined.

b. Chairpersons must be certified through completion of the CalHR Selection Analyst Training: Chairing Interview Examinations (CIE) course. Current employees and retired employees who wish to work for the Department should submit an STD. 678, with a copy of their CIE training certificate to SSES, ES, for consideration. The examination analyst must ensure the chairperson selected for each examination is certified by CalHR and the certification is in good standing.

c. Selecting Chairpersons. When selecting chairpersons, the needs of the Department must be evaluated. This includes an evaluation of the classification being tested and the type of examination being given.

(1) Promotional Examination. Qualified chairpersons for promotional examinations:

(a) May be current or former state employees.

(b) Should not have had an appointment to the classification being tested, or to a classification at a lower level than the classification being tested, for at least the preceding five years. Any exceptions must be approved by the Personnel Management Division (PMD) Chief or designee.

(2) Open Examination. Qualified chairpersons for open examinations may be current or former state employees, regardless of their current or former civil service classification.

d. Personnel Management Division reviews the chairperson applications received and may conduct interviews to evaluate applicants' qualifications to ensure they meet the chairperson criteria. To the extent possible, chairpersons shall be used on a rotational basis to ensure all trained chairpersons are provided opportunities to remain proficient and current on new and revised chairing procedures established by the Department and/or CalHR. Approval by the PMD Chief, or designee, is required before finalizing a QAP chairperson selection on all CHP examinations.

e. Chairperson evaluations shall be completed by the SSRs and reviewed by SSES, ES, staff immediately following the completion of the QAPs. Any comments indicating less than satisfactory performance must be brought to the immediate attention of the PMD Chief, or designee, to determine if further action is warranted. Any Division which has reservations regarding the use of a particular chairperson in the future must provide a written justification to PMD. These requests must be approved by the PMD Chief or designee.

12. TRANSFER OF LIST ELIGIBILITY ON OPEN AND PROMOTIONAL LISTS.

a. Promotional Eligibility. Employees with promotional list eligibility may request to have eligibility transferred to another promotional list of a different department presuming no other restrictions prohibit the transfer, such as a transfer restriction placed on one of the lists involved. The eligibility lists involved must have been established as a result of an examination which was the same or substantially similar in complexity and subject matter. Additional criteria include the following:

(1) The employee has received a job offer from the other department and must be reachable on the other department's list. There is no requirement the person be reachable on the "from" list.

(2) The employee has had no break in service or has reinstated to state service in a new agency or subdivision within six months after a resignation, and had the employee returned to the former agency or subdivision, would have been eligible for certification from a promotional list.

b. Open Eligibility. Persons on a departmental open eligible list may request to have eligibility transferred to another departmental open list presuming no other restrictions prohibit the transfer, such as a transfer restriction placed on one of the lists involved. The eligibility lists involved must have been established as a result of an examination which was the same or substantially similar in complexity and subject matter. Additional criteria or restrictions include the following:

(1) Interdepartmental.

(a) The candidate must have received a job offer from the other department and be reachable on that department's list.

(b) Concurrence of the Personnel Officer, or designee, of the hiring department is required. The hiring department will be responsible for placing the transferee's name on the proper list.

NOTE: Transfers involving a CalHR servicewide open list must be processed by CalHR.

13. STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS. The Statement of Qualifications (SOQ) is a narrative discussion of how the candidate's education, training, experience, and skills meet the minimum and desirable qualifications for the position. Instructions for completion and submission of an SOQ will be provided on the examination bulletin.

14. ASSESSMENT CENTER. An assessment center is a selection device incorporating multiple exercises which allow a team of assessors to observe applicants as they perform job tasks under standardized conditions, in order to assess their readiness for promotion to a particular classification. Assessment centers often include components such as a role play exercise, an in-basket exercise, and/or an oral presentation. Exercises are selected for their appropriateness in measuring the critical requirements of a job. These requirements are determined by analyzing data from the most recent job analysis, as well as requirements listed in the classification specification for the job. The exercises are designed to allow an applicant to actively demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and abilities found to be necessary for success in a particular classification. Applicants are instructed to treat each exercise as if they are at work and the situation is actually occurring. During each exercise, the applicant's performance is observed and evaluated by two or more trained assessors using a specific set of job-related criteria. Depending on the number and type of exercises selected, an assessment center may last several hours to a full day.

15. RESCHEDULED AND DEFERRED EXAMINATIONS.

a. Any competitor's failure to appear for a scheduled examination (e.g., oral interview, written test, performance test) will result in the elimination of the competitor from the examination process, unless the competitor qualifies for a rescheduled or deferred examination. Refer to paragraphs 15.e. and 15.f.

b. Requests for rescheduled or deferred examinations shall be submitted in writing to SSES, ES, prior to the regularly scheduled examination date.

c. Requests for rescheduled or deferred examinations submitted to SSES, ES, after the regularly scheduled examination date will be considered on a case-by-case basis. If, due to unforeseen circumstances, a competitor is unable to submit their request as described in paragraph 15.b., the competitor shall submit their request in writing no later than 30 days following the regularly scheduled examination date.

d. Substantiating documentation may be required by SSES, ES, prior to approval for rescheduled or deferred examinations.

e. Rescheduled Examination.

(1) A rescheduled examination is an oral interview, written test, or performance test conducted after the regularly scheduled examination date(s). Rescheduled examinations are typically conducted within 30 days of the regularly scheduled examination.

(2) Requests to be rescheduled for a phase of an examination (e.g., oral interview, written test, performance test) may be approved for the following reasons: candidate illness or injury; illness or death of an immediate family member; mandated court appearances (i.e., official summons for jury duty or under subpoena to appear in court); preplanned obligations such as a prepaid vacation arranged prior to release of the examination bulletin; a declared natural occurrence which causes a general transportation stoppage such as closure of major roadways, third stage smog alerts, fogged-in airport; to rectify an error by departmental staff; or CalHR, the courts, or other legally empowered administrative body directs a rescheduled examination.

f. Deferred Examination.

(1) A deferred examination is an examination which is scheduled to accommodate a candidate who cannot be scheduled during the normally scheduled examination date(s).

(2) Requests for a deferred examination may be approved due to a candidate's sincerely held religious belief, military obligation or military leave, official departmental assignment which cannot be changed, or to rectify a departmental error or change made to the examination scheduled by the Department. Sections 18990 and 18992 GC provide authority for certain CEA and Executive Branch Exempt employees to request deferred promotional examinations. Employees must meet the MQs specified for the promotional examination. Refer to Section 18993 GC for specific criteria regarding examination deferrals.

NOTE: Not all situations are covered by these guidelines; therefore, competitors are advised to contact SSES, ES, at (916) 843-3820 for assistance.

16. TELEPHONE INTERVIEWS. The Section 5545 of the SPB Selection Manual allows for the use of a telephone interview in lieu of a deferred examination. A telephone interview will be considered only when it has been determined to be in the best interest of the Department and when the following protocol can be met.

a. The competitor shall take the telephone interview only at an approved testing facility.

b. An authorized testing representative shall be present at the competitor's interview location and shall:

(1) Sign a CHP 151, Examination Security Agreement, and provide the document to SSES, ES, prior to the scheduled telephone interview date.

(2) Verify the competitor's identity via a valid photo identification card.

(3) Verify the competitor does not have access to any unauthorized notes, study materials, or other unauthorized documentation during the interview.

17. EXAMINATION SECURITY.

a. State laws require civil service examinations be confidential and impartial. In addition, noncivil service examinations administered and certifications issued by the Department shall be confidential and impartial. Discussing any aspect of an examination or providing examination information to others (not authorized to receive such information) constitutes a violation of state laws and the Department's examination security policy. In accordance with Sections 19682 and 19683 GC, persons who violate these state laws are guilty of a misdemeanor. The appointing power may take adverse action against a state employee, and/or the executive officer of the SPB may file charges against a state employee.

b. Violations of the Department's examination security policy may result in the disqualification of examination competitors, and/or cancellation of certification lists or certificates issued by the Department.

c. Departmental examinations are typically recreated each examination cycle; however, employees are reminded strict confidentiality shall be maintained throughout the examination process.

d. In accordance with Sections 19680 and 19681 GC, it is unlawful for an individual to willfully, or in cooperation with another person, to:

(1) Defeat, deceive, or obstruct any person with respect to a person's right of examination, application, or employment.

(2) Use any unfair means to cause, or attempt to cause, any eligible to waive any rights.

(3) Falsely mark, grade, estimate, or report upon the examination or proper standing of any person examined or certified, or to aid in so doing, or make any false representation concerning the same or the person examined.

(4) Furnish or aid any person with special or secret information for the purpose of improving or injuring the prospects or chances of any person examined, certified, or to be examined or certified.

(5) Practice any deception or fraud with regard to a person's identity in connection with any examination, application, or request to be examined.

(6) Obtain examination questions or other examination materials, except by specific authorization either before, during, or after an examination, or use or purport to use any such examination questions or materials for the purpose of instructing, coaching, or preparing candidates for examinations.

e. Examination security is the responsibility of all persons involved in any aspect of an examination. This includes, but is not limited to:

(1) Persons who are involved in examination planning, coordination, or administration; development, construction, revision or review of test materials; or handling of test materials for purposes of reproduction or transportation.

(2) Persons who are participating in an examination as a competitor, panel member, test proctor, instructor, subject matter expert, or consultant.

f. In accordance with SPB policy:

(1) The names of applicants shall not be made public.

(2) Final examination results are confidential until officially announced.

(3) Consultants, subject matter experts, QAP chairpersons, or SSRs are not to reveal needlessly that they are participating in test preparation or scoring.

g. Communication between competitors during examination is strictly forbidden, and competitors are forbidden to receive any unauthorized assistance in the examination.

h. Before commencement of an examination, competitors will be required to hand to the examiner any unauthorized printed or written matter in their possession which might serve as an aid in the examination. Evidence of copying or collusion may result in the cancellation of the competitor's examination and the debarment of the competitor from future state civil service examinations of any kind.

i. Copies of examination questions may not be made or taken from an examination room.

j. Reporting Requirements for Breaches of Examination Security. All aspects of examinations are confidential. Examination security is the responsibility of all employees/persons. Employees or individuals who become aware of a breach of examination security, or believe the confidential nature of an examination has not been maintained, shall report the incident as soon as possible to their immediate supervisor or to the manager of SSES, ES. Supervisors are responsible for reporting all incidents of examination security breaches through the appropriate chain of command. Examples of breaches of examination security include, but are not limited to: communications between employees and/or competitors regarding examination questions or materials; obtaining, possessing, or furnishing examination materials to others, unless authorized to do so; revealing one's participation as an examination panel member (chairperson or SSR), subject matter expert, or consultant; or any act which would compromise the security of an examination.

k. Responsibilities of Examination Proctors and Receptionists. Examination proctors' or receptionists' responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

(1) Taking Inventory of All Test Materials. Proctors or receptionists are personally responsible and accountable for all examination materials in their possession. Test materials may include reception lists containing competitor names and personal identification information, proctor test instructions, written test books, performance tests, examination questions, answer sheets, miscellaneous forms required for an examination (e.g., rating sheets, examination notes and note-taking forms, audio-recording equipment and audio-recorded information, batteries, timers, pencils). Test materials shall be inventoried both upon receipt and prior to returning the test materials to the appropriate person or proper storage location. Inventory of test materials means counting test books and answer sheets; and accounting for all forms, examination documentation, scratch paper, and/or equipment associated/supplied with the examination.

(2) Maintaining the Security and Confidentiality of Test Materials. Maintaining the security and confidentiality of examination materials means not discussing any aspect of an examination (e.g., previous, current, or future examination questions or answers; scoring standards; identity of competitors; or examination results) with anyone other than persons authorized to receive such information or who are assigned examining duties; ensuring examination materials are secure at all times (not exposed to be inadvertently viewed by unauthorized persons) and kept in a secured location when not in use; disposing of examination materials through the confidential destruction process; and securing computer files or records containing examination information.

Additionally, proctors shall ensure test materials are not confiscated/stolen, photocopied, or notes regarding tests are not made by competitors or other individuals who may be exposed to these materials.

(3) Ensuring the Examination Room/Area/Location is Suitable for Testing. Proctors shall inspect the examination location to ensure it is clean (e.g., tables, chairs, and floor), there is adequate seating and lighting, people or other noises are controlled or eliminated, reasonable accommodations for competitors with a disability are adequate/appropriate, and the area is conducive to testing.

(4) Administering the Examination. Proctors and/or other persons assisting with the administration of an examination are responsible for checking the proper identification and other required documentation of competitors appearing for the examination; documenting all issues occurring before, during, and after the examination; providing instruction to competitors regarding the examination and forms to be completed for the examination; timing the examination; and monitoring the room during the examination to avert talking between competitors, use of unauthorized materials or testing aids, copying of test material, or cheating.

l. Examination Security Agreement. A CHP 151 shall be signed by all persons (employees or other individuals) involved in any aspect of an examination, including persons who issue proficiency certificates (resulting from a noncivil service examination/test) for the Department. The CHP 151 shall be maintained for five years for civil service examinations by SSES, ES, and by those persons authorized to conduct noncivil service examinations and/or issue certificates for the Department.

18. ABOLISHING EMPLOYMENT LISTS. Requests to abolish a departmental employment list require the approval of the Commissioner.