



**Department of
Civil Service**

Getting A Job With New York State

Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor

Getting A Job With New York State

Finding out about job opportunities with the State of New York has never been easier! You can access current examination announcements, current vacancies, promotion opportunities, featured programs, on-line examinations and many more opportunities at www.cs.ny.gov

New York State hires people in a wide variety of occupations. State employees serve as clerks, secretaries, psychiatric social workers, job interviewers, engineers, equipment operators, correction officers, lawyers and accountants, just to name a few of the available careers.

Appointments and promotions in the New York State civil service are made according to principles of "merit and fitness" as mandated by the New York State Constitution. Candidates can compete for competitive class positions by participating in competitive civil service examinations. These examinations assess candidates' knowledge, skills and abilities necessary for performing the job. This publication describes the entire process, from the moment the exam is announced until the time those who score high enough are hired.

Your success in getting a civil service job with New York State will depend primarily on your qualifications, your performance on a competitive examination and the number of job openings available. In most cases, you don't have to be a United States citizen to take a New York State civil service examination or to be appointed to a job.

At least half of State civil service examinations are held as open competitions requiring no previous State employment. The rest are promotion examinations open only to permanent employees of the State.

You will be competing with other individuals on the exam and if you pass, your name will be placed on an eligible list according to your score. The three highest-scoring people on the eligible list are considered first for job openings. Your *reachability* for appointment depends upon the number of job openings and the number of people who scored higher than you. An eligible list is usually good for not less than one year and not more than four.

Most examinations are held periodically, such as once a year. Some examinations are held on a *continuous recruitment* basis. This means that applications are accepted continuously, qualified applicants are tested on an as-needed basis and successful candidates' names are added to the eligible list continuously. The examination announcements provide more detailed information on eligibility and on the opportunity for re-tests to improve scores.

There are some jobs in State service that do not require competitive examinations. You should contact the personnel offices of State agencies that interest you to learn about the availability of such positions, the qualifications and how to apply, if you are qualified.

Examination Announcements

State civil service examinations are publicly announced about nine weeks before they are held. The deadline for filing applications is usually about a month before the test date. Examinations for some titles are held more frequently than for others, depending on the need to fill positions in those titles and the difficulty in finding qualified candidates. As mentioned previously, examinations may be given on a continuous basis for some hard-to-fill titles.

Your first step in looking for a State civil service job is to find out what examinations are scheduled and determine those for which you are qualified. All announcements, both new and old, will be available exclusively on the Department of Civil Service website at www.cs.ny.gov. For the convenience of potential applicants and other stakeholders, the Department provides an automatic new announcement issue notifications by email. Subscription information is at www.cs.ny.gov/announ/emaillist.cfm. These emails provide links to individual announcements so that applicants can obtain more detailed information about each examination. We will ask facilities that traditionally have posted the paper announcements— libraries, Department of Labor offices, community centers and others— to continue to do so.

Although some individuals may not own a computer themselves, computers are increasingly available for use at libraries, religious/community organizations, public/private/not-for-profit employment services as well as through friends and relatives. We encourage job seekers to avail themselves of these online services.

The announcements contain important information to help you determine your eligibility, such as:

- job title
- date of examination
- job location
- duties
- salary
- description of the test
- deadline date for filing applications
- how to apply
- fee information, if applicable

Available by E-Mail or Internet

Examination announcements and application forms may be requested by email at cs.sm.examinfo@cs.ny.gov. If you are interested in a particular examination, include both its title and number, or call:

Examination Information

NYS Department of Civil Service

Albany, NY 12239

Phone: (518) 457-6216

E-mail: cs.sm.examinfo@cs.ny.gov

Community Outreach Office

NYS Department of Civil Service

Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. State Office Building

163 West 125th Street

New York, NY 10027

Phone: (212) 961-4326

Community Outreach Office

NYS Department of Civil Service

Medgar Evers College

1150 Carroll Street, Room M5

Brooklyn, NY 11225

Phone: (718) 804-8278

Keep Informed

In order to keep informed of future examinations, you may want to check the Civil Service website at www.cs.ny.gov or submit an e-mail address to receive notification when new examination announcements are issued. To sign up, visit <http://www.cs.ny.gov/announ/emaillist.cfm>.

How to Apply

If you find an announcement for an examination that interests you, read it carefully before you fill an application out and submit it to take the exam. First, check the minimum qualifications to determine whether you think you qualify. Then note the deadline date for applying to determine how much time you have to file your application. For some examinations, unpaid experience or volunteer work can count toward the minimum qualifications. This will be stated in the announcement.

In describing your education, training and experience, be clear and specific. The decision to admit you to the examination is made solely on the basis of the information you provide, which is subject to verification. An incomplete application could mean a missed job opportunity. If the examination announcement indicates that a filing fee is required, be sure to include a check or money order, payable to the New York State Department of

Civil Service, when you send in your application. You may also file your application on-line from our web site and pay any related fees using your credit card. The amount of the fee is specified in the examination announcement and is a **non-refundable processing fee**.

As an equal opportunity employer, New York State welcomes applications from all qualified applicants.

Veterans' Credits

If you are a veteran, you may be eligible for special consideration and assistance in getting a State job, and also in keeping it after you are hired. If you pass an examination, you may be entitled to extra points added to your score. However, you must claim such credits before the eligible list is established. So, be sure you complete all questions pertaining to your military service.

Notification

After you file your application, you will be notified by mail if it has been approved or disapproved. If your application is not approved, you will be given the reason for the disapproval. If your application is approved and the examination consists of a written test, you will receive an admission notice. This notice will tell you where and when to report to take the test. Read it carefully and be sure to bring it with you when you go to the test center. Admission notices are usually mailed to candidates about ten days before the written test. If you do not receive your notice at least three days before the test date, you should immediately phone the Arrangements Unit of the State Department of Civil Service in Albany at 518-474-6470.

Types of Examinations

Competitive civil service examinations may consist of one or more of the following:

- a written multiple-choice;
- essay or simulation test;
- an oral test;
- a performance test;
- an evaluation of education, training and experience.

Some of these tests are also given in a computerized format. Which tests are included in a particular examination are specified on the announcement. The types of tests are chosen depending upon the nature of the job. The Department of Civil Service does not participate in the development of test-taking courses or books that purport to prepare candidates for particular civil service examinations. Nor does the Department recommend courses or study materials. However, the range of subjects covered in an examination is normally listed on the announcement, and candidates should refer to this listing when choosing study materials from the public library or bookstore.

Taking the Test

State civil service written tests are conducted in various locations throughout the State, usually in schools or colleges. The tests are administered by State-appointed monitors who check in the candidates, explain procedures, distribute test materials, supervise the test administration and then collect all the materials for shipment back to Albany for processing.

Oral tests are also conducted throughout the State, but more often in Albany and New York City than in other locations. Typically, panels of two or three expert examiners ask candidates to discuss job-related issues or problem situations. The particular format and approach may vary, but orals generally test for interpersonal and other skills not easily measured by other selection devices.

Remember, when you take a test, read or listen to all instructions carefully.

After the Examination

After the examination, all examination materials are returned to the Civil Service Department in Albany, which analyzes and grades the tests and prepares eligible lists of passing candidates.

In most cases, the examination results are mailed to candidates in 120 days or less. In some cases, when several thousand people have taken the test and the test is open to review and appeal, it may take longer.

In all cases, candidates receive a notification of examination results form by mail. If your final rating is a passing score (70 or above), the form usually indicates your rank on the eligible list (rank is not given in continuous recruitment examinations).

The Eligible List

The eligible list contains the names of all those who have passed the examination and can be appointed to positions in the title for which the exam was conducted. Your rank on the eligible list is based on your final score or rating with any veteran's credits added where applicable. The name of the person with the highest ranking, or score, is at the top of the list. Appointments must be made from among the top three ranking individuals willing to accept the job to be filled at a specific location. Individuals with tied scores are given the same rank and are considered to be equally eligible for appointment. If there are many individuals with tied scores, there must be fewer than three people in the group willing to accept an offer of employment before a candidate with the next lower score can be considered.

With each successive appointment from an eligible list, lower-ranking individuals move up a step and are more likely to become reachable for appointment. Names of individuals

who are not selected remain on the eligible list until they are hired, their eligibility expires or the list is terminated. Eligible lists usually have a life of one to four years.

Getting the Job

Eligible lists are sent to the State agencies where the job openings are located. The agencies, not the Civil Service Department, do the hiring. Upon receiving the eligible list from Civil Service, the agencies send canvass letters to the top-ranking individuals to determine who is interested in being interviewed. These letters are not job offers. Final selection and appointments are made by the State agency on the basis of such interviews.

Probation

Even after you are appointed to a position, there is one final step in the selection process. You must serve a probationary term, generally 26 to 52 weeks long. During this time, your supervisor will evaluate your performance on the job. For some jobs, you may be required to complete a traineeship, which usually also serves as the probationary period. The length of traineeships varies and is determined by the job title.

Trainees are given specific training in how to perform their jobs and are evaluated periodically on their progress.

Questions

If you have other questions about a job with New York State, please contact one of the Civil Service Department offices listed on page 3. Department representatives will be glad to answer your questions. Good luck!

It is the policy of the New York State Department of Civil Service to provide reasonable accommodation to ensure effective communication of information to individuals with disabilities. If you need an auxiliary aid or service to make this information available to you, please contact the New York State Department of Civil Service Public Information Office at (518) 457-9375.

**Visit the New York State
Department of Civil Service web site
www.cs.ny.gov**

**New York State
Department of Civil Service
Albany, NY 12239**

**Content last updated:
October, 2011**