

**NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL SERVICE**  
**DIVISION OF STAFFING SERVICES**  
**GENERAL INFORMATION BULLETIN No. 09-09**

**TO:** Department and Agency Human Resource, Personnel and Affirmative Action Officers

**FROM:** Blaine Ryan-Lynch, Director of Staffing Services

**SUBJECT:** New On-Line Examination Program to Fill Professional Accounting and Auditing Positions

**DATE:** September 18, 2009

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As the result of an interagency workgroup established in 2008 to develop strategies to improve the hiring and retention of accountants and auditors, the Department of Civil Service is pleased to announce changes to the examination and hiring process for the following titles, effective September 18, 2009:

Senior Accountant SG-18	0403300	Health Care Fiscal An. Trainee 2 NS	0230120
Accountant Trainee 1 NS	0403001	Senior Exr. Municipal Affairs* SG-18	0428300
Accountant Trainee 2 NS	0403002	Exr. Municipal Aff. Trainee 1* NS	0428010
Senior Auditor SG-18	0421300	Exr. Municipal Aff. Trainee 2* NS	0428020
Auditor Trainee 1 NS	0421201	Insurance Examiner* SG-18	0450200
Auditor Trainee 2 NS	0421202	Insurance Examiner Trainee 1* NS	0450010
D.P. Fiscal Sys. Auditor 1 SG-18	0478100	Insurance Examiner Trainee 2* NS	0450020
D.P. Fiscal Sys. Auditor Trainee 1 NS	0478010	Tax Auditor 1* SG-18	0467100
D.P. Fiscal Sys. Auditor Trainee 2 NS	0478020	Tax Auditor Trainee 1* NS	0467010
Senior Health Care Fiscal Analyst SG-18	0230300	Tax Auditor Trainee 2* NS	0467020
Health Care Fiscal An. Trainee 1 NS	0230110		

\* Series marked have decentralized title specific exams; the Professional Careers in Accounting and Auditing exam results are certified as backup lists.

### **CHANGES TO THE ACCOUNTING AND AUDITING ENTRY LEVEL PROCESS**

Effective August 10, 2009 close of business, the existing open-competitive announcements for the Professional Accounting and Auditing Positions examination series (exams #20-802/3/4/5 and 20-822/3/4/5) were withdrawn. No further applications will be accepted for these written tests.

On September 18, 2009, we will issue a new open competitive Professional Careers in Accounting and Auditing announcement. Because of the nature of this examination, there will no longer be separate examination numbers for upstate or downstate, or for trainee versus journey level.

The new examination will be an on-line evaluation of training and experience. Applicants will apply through the web. If they have not previously registered on the Civil Service application website they will need to do so first. Once registered, they will apply for the Professional Careers in Accounting and Auditing examination using a single gateway exam

number (#20-912). We are continuing the recent revision in the minimum qualifications to allow those within six months of graduation (and/or completion of the required 24 credit hours in accounting) to be admitted, although if they appear on the eligible list they will be restricted from appointment until all requirements are met.

The on-line application process blends seamlessly into sections where the applicant enters all the information necessary for the evaluation of training and experience. These sections include:

- accounting coursework (and data processing coursework if applicable) to determine grade point average
- overall grade point average
- related and graduate degree work
- certifications and licensures
- professional experience
- geographic preferences

Upon completion and submission, the application will be automatically scored by a computerized system for four eligible lists.<sup>1</sup> However, those are only tentative scores within the system. Applicants must also send or fax their transcript (and, if relevant, foreign degree equivalency) before the submission is reviewed by Department staff.

The review process will verify whether or not the applicant meets the minimum qualifications for one or more of the exams involved:

- List 20-913 - Accountant/Auditor Trainee 1: bachelor's degree including or supplemented by 24 college credit hours in accounting (this is the baseline exam and applicants who do not meet these qualifications will by definition not meet any of the others);
- List 20-914 - Senior Accountant/Auditor: same as Accountant/Auditor Trainee 1 plus either a current CPA license, or two years of professional accounting experience, or a master's degree in accounting plus one year of professional accounting experience;
- List 20-915 - Data Processing Fiscal Systems Auditor Trainee 1: same as Accountant/Auditor Trainee 1 plus six semester credit hours in information technology/data processing;
- List 20-916 - Data Processing Fiscal Systems Auditor 1: same as Data Processing Fiscal Systems Auditor Trainee 1 plus either a current CISA designation, or two years of professional accounting/auditing experience involving analysis and evaluation of financial environment automated information systems, or a master's degree in accounting plus one year of that specialized experience.

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<sup>1</sup> As with other examinations, the gateway exam number 20-912 is not actually used for an eligible list.

The review process will also evaluate claims made by the applicant which affect the training and experience scoring; the reviewer may disallow items which will then change the tentative score(s). Once the review process is complete, the submission will be released into the Eligible List Management System (ELMS) and added to the appropriate list(s).

### **TIMEFRAMES INVOLVED**

We will take no action on an applicant's submission until we receive the college transcript and, if applicable, foreign degree/education verification. Once that is received, the application will be reviewed and scoring vetted, and then released to ELMS<sup>2</sup>. There will be one run per week. The time between completion of review and appearance on the eligible list will be ten days, a major improvement over the present time frame between application and adding eligibles to the lists.

### **REAPPLICATION**

Although an applicant's eligibility on the list will last for one year, applicants may re-apply every six months. The instructions to the applicant repeatedly stress that they should not apply until they meet the minimum qualifications – thus, if a college senior applies seven months before graduation, that applicant will be blocked from reapplication for six months.

### **ADVANCED PLACEMENT**

Candidates for the Trainee levels will be advised that they will be appointed directly to the Trainee 2 level if they possess **one** year of the applicable professional experience, or a master's degree in accounting, in addition to the existing minimum qualifications. Possession of the required experience is to be determined by the appointing authority at time of interview. You will not need to forward documentation to the Department; any documentation is to be retained in your records. The initial OCM appointment transaction should be made from list 20-913 (Accountant/Auditor Trainee 1) or 20-915 (Data Processing Fiscal Systems Auditor Trainee 1) as applicable, using the Title Code for the relevant Trainee 2 level.

In rare cases, you may discover at the interview that the eligible now meets the qualifications for the journey level title, even though the person is not on the journey level list. You should appoint to the Trainee 2 level from the appropriate list, and then submit a same-day transaction to appoint to the SG-18 level using the code 'NCP.'<sup>3</sup>

By allowing advanced placement entry at the Trainee 2 or SG-18 level, we expect agencies will be better able to attract candidates for these hard-to-fill positions.

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<sup>2</sup> The lists will now include individuals with "57" background restrictions. While not appointable until the restrictions are removed, these candidates must be considered.

<sup>3</sup> This existing NYSTEP code is being used to avoid additional programming at this time.

Under these revised terms, the following conditions will apply:

- **LISTS:** When filling a Senior Accountant or Senior Auditor vacancy, you can specify which list you want to receive – the Trainee list (20-913) or the SG-18 list (20-914) – <sup>4</sup> by ordering using the Trainee 1 or journey level Title Code. However, if one of those lists is exhausted (has less than three acceptors for the position) and the other is not, the viable list **must** be considered. We will not accept non-list appointments (other than temp pending canvass) where a viable list exists. We will, however, consider Rule 4.2(b) nominations in situations where both journey level and trainee lists are exhausted.

For Data Processing Fiscal Systems Auditor positions, the same process as described above will be applicable to use either the Trainee list (20-915) or the SG-18 list (20-916).

Please bear in mind that some eligibles have been admitted under anticipated eligibility – they have not yet completed their educational requirements. These candidates will have a restriction code of 55 ('Education Verification Required') and it is the responsibility of your agency to insure they have completed those requirements before appointment, and to contact Staffing Services Section 4 to have the restriction removed prior to submitting a NYSTEP transaction.

- **CERTIFICATIONS:** Our on-line program also captures an applicant's geographic preferences. That is why we no longer need 'Upstate' and 'Downstate' lists. Those preferences are already accounted for.

- **TRAINEE LIST USE:** When using the Trainee list, the standard rules of reachability still apply; the level at which the Traineeship is filled will be determined by the qualifications of the reachable candidate you select. For example, if the top three acceptors have no experience, you must fill the vacancy at the Trainee 1 level by selecting from among them. You cannot skip three Trainee 1 level eligibles to reach a candidate who meets the qualifications for advanced placement at the 'Trainee 2' level. At time of interview the agency is responsible for verifying official transcripts and, for levels above Trainee 1, verifying employment (dates, hours, duties, employer, etc.) and/or graduate degrees or certifications. Any discrepancies should be brought to our attention immediately.

- **TRAINEE ADVANCEMENT:** Upon appointment to Trainee 1 or Trainee 2 status, advancement to the next level will normally require completion of one year of satisfactory performance; there is no provision for 'fast tracking' based on performance during the traineeship. However, there may be cases where a Trainee did not have enough outside experience at time of appointment to qualify for advanced placement to the Trainee 2 or SG-18 level. When that person accumulates enough experience in the traineeship, when combined with prior outside experience to satisfy the next threshold, you can advance them using the same NCP code described on the previous page. Administration of trainee

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<sup>4</sup> Plus the promotion list, if there is one for your agency, plus any candidates still active on the prior lists from the written PCA&A exams (20-802/3/4/5 and 20-822/3/4/5) until the last eligibility expires.

performance evaluation remains decentralized to the agencies. Agencies are expected to maintain documentation in their records regarding performance review and advancement.

- **TRANSFERS:** Transfers between the titles listed will be allowed subject to the following provisions:

- Transfer between any of these titles during the Trainee 1 year will not affect the length of the traineeship – that time is considered credited time.
- Transfer between any of these titles during the Trainee 2 year will require that the transferee complete a full year in the new Trainee 2 level position prior to advancement to Grade 18.
- Transfer to one of the Data Processing Fiscal Systems Auditor titles will require that the transferee possess the additional educational/experience qualifications.
- Where there are no reemployment lists, we will accept §70.4 transfer nominations, according to the nominee's qualifications, to Trainee 1, 2 or SG-18 levels. Nominations should be forwarded to:

Staffing Services Section S-4  
Room 318  
New York State Department of Civil Service  
Alfred E. Smith State Office Building  
Albany, New York 12239

- **PROMOTION LISTS:** We will continue the existing promotion CR written tests for individual agencies.

If you have any question regarding the details of this General Information Bulletin, please contact Staffing Section 4 at (518) 473-6607.