

NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL SERVICE

DIVISION OF STAFFING SERVICES

GENERAL INFORMATION BULLETIN No. 14-03

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

FROM: Scott DeFruscio, Director of Staffing Services

SUBJECT: Professional Career Opportunities (PCO) Eligible Lists

DATE: September 19, 2014

In January of this year, we announced our first holding of the Professional Career Opportunities (PCO) examination. This exciting new examination allows agencies to attract new college graduates and consider them for their job openings. This GIB is intended to explain the policies for appointment from the eligible lists established from the PCO examination.

Eligible Lists

Two eligible lists are established from the results of the PCO examination, and the policies for appointment vary between the two lists. The Generalist Job Titles list (#20-140) contains the names of all successful candidates for the PCO examination who received a bachelor's degree or higher in any field by September 1, 2014. The Select Job Titles list (No. 20-141) is for titles where selective certification has been approved; these titles have special qualifications in addition to the bachelor's degree requirement. Applicants filled out an optional, online questionnaire asking about their college course work, college credits, and work experience. Their responses to the Questionnaire qualified them for the Select Job Titles.

When filling a vacancy, you must specify which list you want to receive: the Generalist Job Titles list (No. 20-140) or the Select Job Titles list (No. 20-141). You order the certification by using the Trainee 1 or journey level Title Code and indicating the list number. If a title series has a Select Job Titles list for the trainee title and for the journey level title, and 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.

Application review for the PCO exam, including for the Select Job Titles, has been decentralized to the agencies. Agencies must thoroughly review the qualifications of all appointees prior to appointment. Documentation must be kept at the agency.

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Anticipated Eligibility

Applicants must have received a bachelor's or higher level degree in any field by September 1, 2014. When an agency reviews the qualifications of an eligible, they must verify the eligible received their bachelor's or higher level degree in any field by September 1, 2014.

Email Canvasses

All applicants were instructed to provide their email address and to keep their email address current so the Department of Civil Service (Department) and other state agencies can communicate with them. To speed your canvassing of the list and save your agency the costs associated with phone or mail canvasses, you may use the email addresses provided in the cert to canvass the eligibles. You must provide the eligibles two days to respond, consistent with the procedures for phone canvasses.

If an eligible does not respond to your email canvass, you must still consider the eligible as active; you cannot inactivate an eligible on a cert based on a failure to respond to an email canvass. You may choose to not consider eligibles who do not respond to your email canvass. If you need to get to the next score, you must follow up the email canvass with a phone or mail canvass of the cert and then record the results of that canvass in ELMS.

Effect of Appointment from a PCO List

Appointees from list No. 20-140 will be inactivated on that list depending on the salary grade of the journey level of the traineeship, following rules for the former Professional Careers Test (PCT). For example, if an eligible is appointed to a traineeship leading to G-16, they will be inactivated on the eligible list for all traineeships leading to a title at G-16 and below, but will remain active for all traineeships leading to a title above G-16.

Appointees from list No. 20-140 will remain active for titles filled from list No. 20-141 and appointees from list No. 20-141 will remain active for titles filled from list No. 20-140, regardless of grade level. Appointees from list No. 20-141 will remain active for all other titles filled from No. 20-141, except eligibles appointed from a journey level title No. 20-141 list shall be inactivated on the trainee list leading to the same title if the trainee list is also filled from list No. 20-141.

Advanced Placement from PCO Lists

All advanced placement decisions are at the agency's discretion. By allowing advanced placement entry at the Trainee 2 or journey level title, we expect agencies will be better able to attract candidates for their positions.

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When using the Trainee lists, the standard rules of reachability still apply; however, the level at which the traineeship is filled can be determined by the qualifications of the reachable candidate you select. For example, if experience is required for advanced placement and the top three acceptors have no experience, you must fill the vacancy at the Trainee 1 level by selecting one of those acceptors. You cannot skip three Trainee 1 level acceptors to reach a candidate who meets the qualifications for advanced placement at the Trainee 2 or journey level.

Advanced placement appointments are made directly from the eligible list to the Trainee 2 or to the journey level title. Once a trainee appointment has been made, the agency cannot give the employee an advanced placement appointment in that series; the appointee must progress through the traineeship. For example, if an appointee has nine months of the twelve months of experience needed for advanced placement, the appointee cannot be advanced after three months. Also, if an agency appoints someone as a Trainee 1 and later finds they could have advanced placed the appointee as a Trainee 2, an advanced placement appointment to the Trainee 2 will not be allowed.

The advanced placement minimum qualifications for all PCO titles are viewable in the Examinations section of the DCS Business Suite. Experience must be professional experience. Out-of-title work in a state title cannot be accepted and experience in a clerical, secretarial or administrative title cannot be considered as professional. For example, work as a Head Clerk (Personnel), Payroll Examiner, or Payroll Specialist is not professional experience and cannot be used for advanced placement.

An eligible list for the journey level title does not block advanced placement appointments, except that a promotion list for a title must be exhausted before a PCO list for the same title can be used.

Advanced placement will be allowed from PCO list No. 20-140 to all levels of the Generalist Job Titles. In most cases, one year of professional experience performing the duties of the journey level title is required for advanced placement to Trainee 2 in a two year traineeship; one year of professional experience performing the duties of the journey level title is required for advanced placement to the journey level title in a one year traineeship; and two years of professional experience performing the duties of the journey level title is required for advanced placement to the journey level title in a two year traineeship. In cases, where there is a Select Job Titles list that requires two years of specialized experience for the journey level title and the trainee title is filled from the Generalist Job Titles list, the advanced placement minimum qualifications for appointment to the Trainee 2 are one year of the required experience and for appointment to the journey level is two years of the required experience. Advanced placement may also be allowed per agreed upon minimum qualifications.

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Advanced placement will be allowed from PCO list #20-141 to all levels of the Select Job Titles per agreed upon minimum qualifications.

Process for advanced placement appointments:

- Generalist Job Titles - Advanced placement appointments need the approval of the agency's Staffing Services Representative. Possession of the required education and/or experience is to be determined by the appointing authority at time of interview. Prior to appointment, the agency must submit to their Staffing Services Representative Form ATT-00271 (available in the Examinations section of the DCS Business Suite), a NYS-APP and other supporting documentation showing the eligible's qualifications, and an attestation the eligible meets the advanced placement minimum qualifications and is reachable on the list. Documentation must be kept at the agency.
- Select Job Titles – Possession of the required education and/or experience is to be determined by the appointing authority at the time of interview. You will not need to forward documentation to the Department; documentation is to be retained in your records. The agency submission of the NYSTEP transaction is the agency's attestation the appointee meets the requirements for advanced placement and is reachable on the list.

Transfers and Other PCO Appointments

The standard rules for transfer shall apply for transfer into and between PCO titles, including the requirement of one year of permanent service in the title the employee is transferring from. If requested, the one year of permanent service requirement can be waived by the Director, Division of Staffing Services.

Transfers will be allowed directly to the appointment title from titles within two salary grades; advancement after transfer to a Trainee title requires a year as a trainee. For example, a G-11 employee can only be transferred to a trainee title within two grades of the employee's current title.

The determination as to how the impact of a transfer between PCO titles during the first year of the traineeship will affect the length of the traineeship is at the agency's discretion. Time served in the original title may be considered credited time. Transfer between any of the PCO titles during the second year of the traineeship will require the transferee complete a full year in the new Trainee 2 title prior to advancement. Transfer between any of the PCO titles during the first year in the journey level title will require the transferee complete the probationary period required by Rule 4.5 of the Rules for the Classified Service.

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Civil Service Law section **70.4 transfers** will be allowed based on a current or past PCO or PCT passing score or a current or past PATT passing score (if the transferee has a bachelor's degree) to Generalist Job Titles and Select Job Titles as long as the transferee did not fail a more recent holding of the PCT, PCO or PATT. For transfers to Select Job Titles, the transferee must meet the minimum qualifications for the Select Job Title; the transferee did not have to have submitted the PCO questionnaire. Prior to appointment, the agency must submit to their Staffing Services Representative Form ATT-00271 (available in the Examinations section of the DCS Business Suite), a NYS-APP and other supporting documentation showing the eligible's qualifications, and an attestation the eligible meets the minimum qualifications. Documentation must be kept at the agency.

Early advancements during the traineeship will only be allowed in accordance with SPMM Advisory Memorandum #01-04.

4.2(b) nominations will be considered to a Select Job Title that does not have a traineeship. 4.2(b) nominations will be considered to a Select Job Title when the trainee title is filled by the Generalist Job Titles list and the journey level title is filled by the Select Job Titles list and the journey level eligible list is exhausted. If both the trainee and the journey level titles are filled by Select Job Titles lists, both Select Job Titles lists would have to be exhausted before we would allow a 4.2(b) nomination.

Foreign Degrees and Coursework

Where the applicant indicated a foreign degree(s), the Department requested the applicant provide us with an evaluation of the foreign degree(s) and advised the applicant they need to provide agencies the evaluation of the foreign degree(s) at the interview. If an applicant did not provide us a foreign degree evaluation from an acceptable company or the evaluation of the foreign degree(s) did not show the degree(s) was the equivalent of a bachelor's or higher-level degree in the United States, you will not see the eligible on your list. If an applicant did not indicate in their PCO application they have a foreign degree, the Department could not follow this process. Therefore, the eligible's name may appear on a certification.

Applicants were instructed to provide course by course evaluations of their foreign coursework at the interview if they used foreign credits to qualify for a Select Job Title. It is the agency's responsibility to review the type of college degree and/or the course by course listing to determine if the eligible is qualified for Select Job Titles that require a specific college degree or college course work.

If an eligible cannot provide an acceptable evaluation of their foreign degree(s) or the course by course evaluation needed for a Select Job Title, agencies can make them temporarily unavailable (TI) for the life of the cert. Be sure to explain this carefully and

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encourage the eligible to get the needed evaluations. Information about the companies that provide the evaluations is available in the PCO FAQs and PCO Dashboard.

DQ Process for PCO Titles

The Department has developed a process to quickly determine whether someone should be disqualified for appointment to a Generalist Job Title or a Select Job Title. However, since the eligible is entitled to due process, the eligible must remain active and be coded as a non-select (NS) on the list while the Department conducts its review.

Eligibles are on a Select Job Titles list based on their attestation they will have a bachelor's or higher level degree by September 1, 2014, and their indication in the PCO Questionnaire they have the necessary qualifications for the Select Job Title. The Department did not review the qualifications of the eligibles, except for the review of foreign degrees as described above.

At time of interview the agency is responsible for verifying official transcripts, employment (dates, hours, duties, employer, etc.), and college degrees and/or college course work. If an agency determines an eligible does not have a bachelor's or higher level degree or an eligible does not have the qualifications to be on a Select Job Titles list, the agency must send the PCO Unit documentation clearly demonstrating why a person is not qualified. The documentation must include interview results with the eligible or responses to an agency questionnaire asking about the minimum qualifications. A resume from the eligible is not sufficient. If the documentation is not clear, the process will be extended as the Department gathers more information from the agency.

When an agency submits sufficient documentation, PCO staff will contact the eligible, share the agency's findings, and request proof from the eligible that he/she is qualified. If we find that the eligible is qualified, we will notify the agency of our findings and instruct the agency to consider the eligible. If we find that the eligible is not qualified, we will notify the agency they do not need to consider the eligible and we will have the eligible removed from the list.

Information and Contacts

- PCO Dashboard <http://www.cs.ny.gov/pco/>
- PCO Unit email: PCO@cs.ny.gov
- Phone: (518) 473-9388