

HOW TO GET



This pamphlet is a guide to getting a civil service job. The process begins with the search for open examinations and ends when you successfully complete your probationary period.

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has about 80,000 employees. Of those, approximately 70 percent are members of the civil service. An additional 10,000 employees work for one of 300 local government agencies providing services in such areas as Mental Health/Mental Retardation; Aging; Children, Youth and Families; Drug and Alcohol; and Emergency Management.

The civil service or merit system hires, retains, and promotes people based on their qualifications and ability to perform the work. The State Civil Service Commission (SCSC) administers the merit system.

A CIVIL SERVICE JOB

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Apply for a Civil Service Job

The first step is to apply to take a test. You only can apply for tests that have been announced and are open.

To learn what tests are open, view the Summary of Civil Service Examinations, check under the "Job Opportunities" section on the SCSC website or obtain a printed summary from a SCSC office listed on the back of this pamphlet.

Review test announcements -- for those jobs that interest you to be sure you meet the minimum requirements.

Apply -- complete a civil service application for each test announcement. Completing an online application is best.

Schedule -- you can schedule yourself for a test, if you apply online, or let SCSC schedule you. In addition, stand-by (unscheduled) testing is available. Contact a SCSC office for more information on scheduling.



Take Civil Service Tests

Generally, there are four types of tests used to measure your job-related knowledge, skills and abilities:

Written tests -- taken on a computer in a test center, these tests can include multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank or essay questions. On-screen instructions guide you through the process.

Performance tests -- also computer-based, these tests measure your ability to perform job tasks, such as typing.

Oral tests -- a panel of trained raters asks you a series of structured questions and rates your responses on specific factors.

Experience & Training (E&T) ratings - information on your experience and training provided on your application or in a supplement is given a score. It is very important to provide complete and accurate information for this type of test, since your score is solely based on the information you provide.



Get Hired

Score -- SCSC sends you a notification of your test score.

After passing the test -- and meeting the minimum requirements, your name is added to lists of applicants and ranked according to score. When agencies decide to fill vacancies they may contact SCSC for official ("certified") copies of these lists.

Contact -- hiring is usually done from the highest-ranking applicants on a list. If your score ranked high enough the hiring agency will contact you about your interest and availability for an interview.

Interview -- generally, agencies schedule interviews of the highest-scoring available applicants on lists for jobs they are trying to fill. To learn more about the agencies, visit their websites or contact their Human Resource Office.

Selection -- if an agency selects you, you will serve a civil service probationary period to determine your suitability for regular status. When you successfully complete your probationary period, the process is complete and you will become a permanent civil service employee!

Test Taking Advice and Tips

The Commission does not provide study guides for specific examinations. However, the best method of preparing for any civil service test is to carefully read the test announcement, particularly the "Testing" section and follow these suggestions:

- Do not pay for services that claim they will help you get a civil service job.
- For written tests, you may want to review books or search the Internet on the "Subject Areas" listed in the announcement. For oral tests, review the "Factors" listed in the test announcement.
- For performance tests, view the test announcement to determine the performance standards that must be met, then practice the skill to improve your chances of getting a good score.
- For oral tests, practice your communication skills (and other "Factors" listed in the test announcement) with friends and ask for their feedback.
- For tests administered on a computer, get comfortable with the computer tutorials; i.e., the Mouse Tutorial and the Quick Help Tutorial available on the SCSC's website.
- On the day of testing, give yourself plenty of extra time to get to the test center, park, and become familiar with the test facility.
- You must bring two forms of identification; one form must contain your signature and a recent photograph.
- Do not bring food, beverages, cell phones, beepers, calculators or other electronic communication devices.
- Follow test instructions carefully.
- Read each test question thoroughly and make sure you understand what is being asked.
- For written tests, if you are not sure of the exact answer to a multiple-choice test question, eliminate all the answers you know are wrong, then go with your best choice.
- It is to your advantage to answer as many test questions as possible.
- For oral tests, take several seconds to organize your thoughts before you begin to respond.
- Manage your time wisely and relax.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Visit our website at:

www.scsc.state.pa.us

OR

Visit/Call one of our offices at:

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*(Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing callers only)