

**STATE OF ALASKA
DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION
DIVISION OF PERSONNEL**

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

I. THE APPLICATION

A. Purpose

The purpose of this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is to provide guidelines and required procedures for the review and examination of employment applications.

The term “examiner” in this SOP means the person delegated to review applications and make the determination of whether or not an applicant meets the minimum qualifications for the job class.

B. Scope

These procedures apply to the review and examination of all applications for positions covered by the Personnel Act.

C. Authority

PERSONNEL RULE 2 AAC 07.010 CLASS SPECIFICATIONS
PERSONNEL RULE 2 AAC 07.086 METHODS OF APPLICATION
PERSONNEL RULE 2 AAC 07.096 EVALUATION OF APPLICATIONS
PERSONNEL RULE 2 AAC 07.101 SCOPE OF ASSESSMENT
PERSONNEL RULE 2 AAC 07.112 DISQUALIFICATION
PERSONNEL RULE 2 AAC 07.113 RECORDS; MAINTENANCE OF DOCUMENTS
PERSONNEL RULE 2 AAC 07.450 RESOLUTION OF COMPLAINTS MADE BY THE PUBLIC
PERSONNEL RULE 2 AAC 07.930 PERSONNEL DUTIES
ALASKA STATUTE 39.25.150 (19) SCOPE OF THE RULES

D. Application Processing

1) Workplace Alaska

(a) The State of Alaska tracks employment applications in an on-line system identified as Workplace Alaska.

(b) Hard copy applications-vs-on-line applications: Hard copy applications received in the Division of Personnel by the closing date will be input into Workplace Alaska by Division of Personnel staff and forwarded to the department’s Technical Services examining staff. Applications received after the advertised closing date will be returned to the applicant unprocessed.

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E. Application Review

- 1) Personal Friend: An examiner may not process or examine an application from a member of the examiner's family, from a personal friend, or from any person the examiner would for any reason be uncomfortable examining. In these cases, the examiner should bring the application to the Technical Services examining staff with an explanation of the circumstances. A personal friend is defined as someone the examiner frequently meets by previous arrangement for social functions.
- 2) Scope of Recruitment: Review the application to determine whether or not the applicant is eligible to submit an application.
 - (a) Residency:

If applicable, determine if the applicant is an Alaska resident.

 - (1) Alaska residence for purposes of employment preference is established when a person is domiciled in the State of Alaska. Domicile is defined as "the true and permanent home of a person, from which there is no present intention of moving and to which there is an intention to return whenever away." If the recruitment is not open to out-of-state residents and the applicant is not an Alaska resident, the application will not be evaluated for minimum qualifications (MQs).
 - (2) If the applicant provides conflicting information concerning residency (e.g., claims residency but is currently employed in another state, or has an Alaska address and does not claim residency), a determination will be made by the Management Services staff or Employee Services Manager. A Residency Affidavit (Addendum A may be requested from the applicant before making a determination.)
 - (b) State Employee Status

Verify the applicant's claim to be an employee in the applicable job class and bargaining unit.
- 3) Minimum Qualifications (MQs)

Verify the applicant meets the minimum qualifications based on the information they have provided in the Applicant Profile and Job Qualification Summary (JQS)

 - (a) Application Sections
 - (1) Applicant Profile
 - (i) Personal Information
 - (ii) Alaska Resident Information
 - (iii) U.S. Employment right
 - (iv) Relationship to State employees

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- (v) Convictions
- (vi) Education & Training Information
- (vii) Certifications, licenses and date obtained
- (viii) Career-specific, job-related training and skills
- (ix) Experience (Work History)
- (x) Veterans' / National Guard Preference Information
- (xi) Applicant Signature

(2) Job Qualification Summary

- (i) Required Job Qualifications
- (ii) Minimum Qualification Questions
- (iii) State Employment Status
- (iv) Convictions
- (v) Desired Qualification Questions
- (vi) Additional Information
- (vii) Applicant Cover Letter
- (viii) Applicant Signature (hard copy applications only)
- (ix) Evaluation Survey for Workplace Alaska

(b) Evaluate the application for education, typing certification, work history, licenses, and certifications to determine if the applicant meets the minimum requirements for the job class. A more detailed description of the training and experience standards is outlined in sections II and III of this SOP.

(c) Combinations. When a class specification lists two or more methods of meeting the MQs, consider any combination as qualifying, unless an exception is documented in the job class file. For example, if a job class lists education "OR" experience and an applicant has not fully met either requirement but has completed a portion of the education required and a portion of the experience required which, when combined, fulfill the total amount of time required at the specified level, the MQs for the job class are considered as being met.

If there are two or more "Substitutions" listed in the MQs, combinations meeting the time and level requirements may be qualifying. Check the job class file if application of the substitutions is unclear. When the MQs state, "other combinations of education and experience will be evaluated for comparability," consider any combination meeting the time and level requirements as qualifying even if no substitutions are specifically mentioned. Any restrictions will be specifically noted in the MQs. Otherwise, assume no restrictions. Check for interpretive memoranda for guidelines for the specific job class.

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- (d) Any questions unanswered by the general procedures above, or memoranda interpreting the MQs, are to be taken to the Employee Services Manager. Periodically, memoranda to formalize an interpretation will be issued by either the Employee Services Manager or the Classification Manager. Copies will be provided to Management Services and the classification section of the Division of Personnel. Reference material for examining may be found in the Class Specification File for the job class. The locations and contents of these files are listed in Addendum B.
- (e) The applicant must meet the MQs at the time of application. Under extenuating circumstances the director of Personnel may waive this requirement for a single recruitment and instead have the applicant meet the MQs at the time of appointment.

Addendum:

A: Residency Affidavit

B: Reference Material

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II. EDUCATION

A. Purpose

The purpose of this section is to provide guidelines and required procedures for determining qualifying education on employment applications.

B. Scope

These procedures apply to the review and examination of all applications for positions covered by the Personnel Act.

C. Authority

Personnel Rule 2 AAC 07.010 CLASS SPECIFICATIONS

Personnel Rule 2 AAC 07.096 EVALUATION OF APPLICATIONS

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D. High School Education

1) Acceptable Equivalencies

MQs State:	Acceptable Equivalencies
High school graduation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Issuance of a high school diploma by a school district, including foreign high schools 2. Issuance of a high school diploma by a state, based on successful completion of a G.E.D. test. 3. Issuance of a high school diploma by the military based on satisfactory completion of a G.E.D. test. 4. Acceptance in full standing by an accredited college.
High school graduation Equivalency	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Issuance of a high school diploma by a school district, including foreign high schools 2. Issuance of a high school diploma by a state, based on successful completion of a G.E.D. test. 3. Issuance of a high school diploma by the military based on satisfactory completion of a G.E.D. test. 4. Acceptance in full standing by an accredited college. 5. Completion of any basic education course of 480 class room hours (16 weeks at 30 hours per week). 6. Six months of work experience performing duties closely related to the job class. 7. Twelve months of work experience involving <u>some</u> routine tasks related to the job in question. (For example, a Stock Clerk who must maintain records or a table attendant who must compose checks for customers would meet the high school requirement for a clerical class.) 8. When an applicant has no experience related to the job, the following formula is used to determine high school equivalency: Highest grade of school completed plus amount of work experience which totals 12 years. This can be any kind of work experience.

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E. College Education

1) Acceptable Equivalencies

MQs State	Acceptable Equivalencies
College Graduation	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Actual issuance of a Bachelor's degree from an accredited college2. Written verification from the college that all degree requirements have been completed.
College Graduation or the Equivalent	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Actual issuance of a Bachelor's degree from an accredited college2. Written verification from the college that all degree requirements have been completed3. College transcripts reflect satisfactory completion of at least 128 semester hours, 192 quarter hours or 219 trimester hours (6 Trimester = 3-1/2 Semester) or an equivalent combination of semester, quarter, and trimester hours. (See Addenda A and B.) There is no specific requirement of upper and lower division

2) Applying the equivalencies:

- (a) Partial completion of college to meet MQs or a substitution can be determined by the tables in Addenda A and B which convert undergraduate and graduate credit to months of experience. Do not assume 96 semester hours automatically equates to achieving Junior standing if the most recent degree is only an associate's degree.
- (b) Major Course Work. The requirement of graduation with a "major in," "major course emphasis in," etc., requires completion of 24 semester hours including 16 upper division semester hours in the major, in addition to the degree requirements. Partial completion of college "with a major in" can be achieved by the following formula (in addition to the partial graduation requirements of the above):
 - (1) Sr., 4 years, 24 semester hours in that major including 16 upper division.
 - (2) Jr., 3 years, 16 semester hours in that major including 8 upper division.
 - (3) Soph., 2 years, 8 semester hours in that major no upper division.
 - (4) Fresh., 1 year, 0 semester hours in that major no upper division.
- (c) The first year of college in any degree program is creditable toward college graduation in any field. All credits gained at the graduate level are considered upper division.

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- (d) The usual correspondence between quarter and semester hours is three quarter hours equals two semester hours. In any case of nonconforming credits, review the college catalog for the method of awarding credits. There are catalogs on microfiche in University of Alaska, Southeast library for nearly all accredited schools. This type of information may also be obtained at individual accredited colleges' web sites which can be found through the [Council for Higher Education Accreditation](#) website. Some transcripts provide explanations, as well. In such schools, a year is equivalent to one-fourth of the requirements for completing a bachelor's degree. Partial years are determined by the ratio of credits completed to the requirements for a year.
- 3) Applying Substitutes:
- (a) Associate Degree Equivalent: Receipt of an Associate degree in a two-year program shall be credited as 24 months of education, regardless of the actual number of semester/quarter hours earned.
 - (b) Bachelor's Degree Equivalent: Receipt of a Bachelor's degree from a four-year program shall be credited as 48 months of education, regardless of the actual number of semester/quarter hours earned. Example: 120 Semester hours (with degree) is counted 4 years. Likewise, 147 semester hours (with degree) is counted 4 years.
 - (c) Graduate Degree Equivalent: There is no preset maximum for credits applied to graduate level study. However, there is a limit to the amount of credit given for graduate degrees earned when semester or quarter hours are not listed.
 - (d) If a Master's degree has been granted, one year of credit is given. This is only if no hours of completed study are noted.
 - (e) If a doctoral degree has been granted, three years of credit are given.
 - (f) If both Master's and doctoral degrees are granted, three years of credit are given.
 - (g) Receipt of a Master's degree in a specific subject may be substituted for "graduation with a Bachelor's degree in/with a major in . . ." the same subject area, provided that the Master's degree contains sufficient semester hours (18 graduate level/24 undergraduate) to be counted as a major.
 - (h) Receipt of a doctorate in a specific subject from an approved school may be substituted for a Master's degree in the same subject.

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4) Accreditation

(a) Accredited Schools.

(1) The [U.S. Department of Education](#) does not accredit educational institutions and/or programs, however, they publish a list of accrediting agencies that the U.S. Secretary of Education determines to be reliable authorities as to the quality of education or training provided by the institutions of higher education and the higher education programs they accredit. This site provides information regarding lists of recognized agencies on state and national levels.

(2) The [Council on Higher Education Accreditation](#) (CHEA) is currently the entity that carries out a recognition function in the private, non-governmental sector.
One Dupont Circle NW • Suite 510
Washington DC 20036-1135
202-955-6126 (voice)
202-955-6129 (fax)

(3) CHEA has an internet database of institutions accredited by recognized United States accrediting organizations. A list of these organizations and their web sites is available by clicking "Search by Organization." Also on the CHEA web site database, you can search by the name of the institution to see if it is accredited or you can search by State to see a list of accredited institutions.

[Council for Higher Education Accreditation](#)

(4) Specialized Schools

- (i) Law schools recognized by the [American Bar Association](#);
- (ii) Medical schools recognized by the [American Medical Association](#);
- (iii) Engineering schools accredited by the [Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology](#) (ABET) are all acceptable accredited schools.

(b) Nonaccredited schools.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to provide documentation that the credits earned from a nonaccredited school have been accepted by an accredited school or reviewed by a credentials evaluation service. Addendum C lists several of these services. When an applicant transfers from a nonaccredited to an accredited school and transcripts show acceptance of credits, we also will accept the nonaccredited school subjects.

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- (c) Foreign universities.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to provide evidence that credits earned from a foreign university have been accepted by an accredited institution or by a credentials evaluation service. See Addendum C.

F. Other Types of Education.

1) Correspondence Study

- (a) Correspondence study is acceptable for meeting education requirements, if appropriate, when completed through an accredited school. The method for evaluating is as follows:

- (b) 45 hours of accredited correspondence study equates to one semester hour of college study. Semester hours are converted to months and years of experience by the conversion table. (Addendum A).

2) Vocational-Technical Schools.

- (a) To calculate the months of experience credit for vocational or technical schools, divide the total hours completed by 150. The balance is the number of months of education credit.

- (b) Two of the reference books that list accredited vocational and/or technical schools are: Directory of Accredited Institutions, put out by the [Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools](#), and Accredited Institutions of Postsecondary Education, put out by the American Council on Education. Each publication has explanatory pages on how to use the book and the accrediting process.

- (c) The [Council for Higher Education Accreditation](#) (CHEA) website is also available to confirm accreditation.

3) Military Schools/Training.

Military training/schooling beyond Basic Training may be used if the agency providing the course work is accredited by one of the accrediting bodies for the various types of schools. Such accreditation is rare, but not unheard of.

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- 4) Certified Public Manager, University of Alaska.

The [Certified Public Manager](#) program at the [University of Alaska](#) is specifically designed to assist professionals in all occupations to become managers as well. After careful evaluation of the program, the division has determined to recognize the completion of the following levels to be the equivalent to the indicated semester hours, or equivalent experience. Credit should be given for the highest level completed only.

- (a) Level I 5 sem. hours 2 months
- (b) Level II 13 sem. hours 5 months
- (c) Level III 21 sem. hours 8 months

Addendum:

A: Conversion – Undergraduate Collage

B: Conversion - Graduate Collage

C: Credentials Service Agencies

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III. EXPERIENCE

A. Purpose

The purpose of this section is to provide guidelines and required procedures for determining qualifying experience on employment applications.

B. Scope

These procedures apply to the review and examination of all applications for positions covered by the Personnel Act.

C. Authority

Personnel Rule 2 AAC 07.010 CLASS SPECIFICATIONS
Personnel Rule 2 AAC 07.096 EVALUATION OF APPLICATIONS

D. Calculating Length of Experience

1) Full-time experience

- (a) Credit work experience up to a maximum of full-time, 35-40 hours per week.
- (b) Hours worked in excess of 40 hours per week on the same job (overtime) or a second job performing the same kind of duties are not creditable.
- (c) When duties are significantly different and the experience is appropriate, credit for additional time may be allowed for a second job. For example, if both social work and business administration are qualifying for a class, an applicant with a full-time social worker job who ran a business on weekends may be credited with extra time. An applicant who was a full-time social worker who also was a volunteer or paid "hot-line" operator would not.

2) Part-time experience

Less than full-time experience may be credited on a prorated basis. A full-time workweek may vary from 35 to 40 hours depending on the employer. The method for evaluating a part-time workweek is as follows:

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(a) Number of hours worked per week x 52 ÷ 12 x months employed ÷ 150 (average hours worked per month) = months of experience.

(b) Addendum A provides the proration factors.

3) Formulas for calculating work experience

(a) For each period of full-time experience, subtract the beginning work date from the ending work date to arrive at the total length of experience. For example, if the applicant was appointed on February 25, 1984, and separated on December 31, 1990:

$$\begin{array}{r} 90\text{y } 12\text{m } 31\text{d} \text{ (Separation Date)} \\ - 84\text{y } 02\text{m } 25\text{d} \text{ (Appointment Date)} \\ \hline = 06\text{y } 10\text{m } 06\text{d} \text{ (Total Service Time)} \end{array}$$

(b) Part-time work week (See addendum A)

(c) Round up at half a month (half a month equals 15 or more days)

(d) Rounding for intermittent employment with an employer (such as seasonal employment with the State of Alaska) applies to the total employment and not to each segment.

4) Experience for an applicant's employment at the time of application is evaluated to the date the application is submitted. Thus, employment "to present" is evaluated to the date the application is submitted.

(a) The time between submission of the application and review for MQs is not considered.

(b) The time between submission of the application and response to an MQ complaint or appeal is not considered.

E. Credit for Work Experience

1) Acting Status. When a State employee in the classified service claims he/she is performing duties not listed in the position description (PD) on file, or claims to be working in a higher capacity or in a different job class, credit is granted only in the following instances:

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- (a) Prior written delegation in accordance with appropriate collective bargaining agreement to perform all the duties of the higher level is on file with the Division of Personnel; or
 - (b) A Personnel Action (PA) appointing the employee to acting status, in accordance with the appropriate collective bargaining agreement, is on file with the Division of Personnel.
- 2) Internships. Internships should not provide both education and experience credit for the same effort. In general, internships for which college credit is received are not credited as work experience. If an internship involves a lot more work hours than the equivalent educational credit, the excess may be credited as experience. See section II for standard equivalencies for education.
- 3) Military Service.
- (a) Experience gained while a member of the military service is acceptable full-time paid work experience. Its relevance to the MQs for a particular job class depends on the specific description of duties provided by the applicant.
- 4) Nonpaid work experience is given the same consideration as paid work experience. Evaluate the nonpaid experience according to the same guidelines. This is an easily overlooked area because applicants tend to be sketchy as to responsibilities and hours per week performing those responsibilities.
- F. Substituting Experience for Education.
- 1) Combined education and experience may be gained in any time sequence unless specifically restricted by the MQs.
- (a) Where the MQs state, "other combinations of education and experience will be evaluated for comparability," appropriate education and experience may be combined and/or substituted for each other even if no substitutions are outlined in the MQs. This policy on substitution applies unless substitution is restricted in the classification specifications.
- (1) "Appropriate" implies experience reasonably related to the class applied for.
 - (2) "Appropriate" includes kind, level, amount, and must be evaluated separately for each class.

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- 2) When substituting experience for an education requirement, the experience can be as broad as the education requirement. Unless specifically restricted, a variety of experience will be accepted as equivalent to the education. Just as curricula in the social sciences can vary from institution to institution, and even student to student, so can the experience used to substitute for that education.

Addendum A: Table of Credit

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IV. COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

A. Purpose

These procedures apply to the review and examination of all applications for positions covered by the Personnel Act.

The purpose of this section is to provide the procedures for responding to applicant complaints and appeals regarding MQ determinations.

B. Scope

Applicants may appeal or complain about Minimum Qualification (MQ) determinations for State positions covered by the Personnel Act.

C. Authority

ALASKA STATUTE 39.25.150(16) SCOPE OF THE RULES

PERSONNEL RULE 2 AAC 07.450 RESOLUTION OF COMPLAINTS MADE BY THE PUBLIC

D. MQ Determination Review Authority

Delegations of examining authority include responding to complaints as the "section chief" under 2 AAC 07.450 (b).

An examiner cannot reverse a previous action under his/her own signature.

E. MQ Determination Review Process:

- 1) Complaints received by a telephone call or personal appearance will be treated as "informal".
- 2) Complaints and appeals will be treated as "formal" if they are submitted in writing within specified time frames outlined in Personnel Rule 2 AAC 07.450.
- 3) Initial review should be based on the original application package.
- 4) After initial review, the examiner will take the appropriate action:
 - (a) Uphold the MQ determination based on a written analysis; or

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- (b) Specify how the applicant meets the MQs for the job class in question and whether the individual should be considered for the current vacancy based on a written analysis.

Note: When an applicant appeals a MQ determination and the State is in error, the recruitment process may be delayed.

- 5) The analysis will be written following this basic format:

- (a) An introduction stating the reason or circumstances of the inquiry. Identify the job class(es) in question. For example, "As requested, I reviewed your application for...." Or, if a request for review was addressed to a particular Examiner, the following may be used, "I have reviewed the actions Mr. No way has taken on your Dog Catcher I application...." Without being verbose, try to avoid the negative words of "rejection," "failure" and the like.
- (b) An explanation and amplification of the Minimum Qualifications to whatever extent is necessary to arrive at a clear explanation. Enclose a copy if they are extensive or complicated.
- (c) A review of the appropriateness of the applicant's training and experience according to point b. above. Be sure the explanation illustrates what is qualifying or what is not qualifying. For example, "Your two years experience as an Accounting Technician II in the Bags of Money D.P.A. firm overseeing closing statements, and income taxes of corporate clients would not meet the requirements of Accounting Supervisor III, but would be qualifying for Accounting Supervisor II."
- (d) A statement of the conclusion of the review.
- (e) The applicant should be made aware that it is his/her responsibility to prove s/he meets the MQs when applying for future vacancies.

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V. DELEGATION OF EXAMINING AUTHORITY

A. Purpose

The purpose of this section is to describe the examining authority to departments.

B. Scope

These procedures apply to the review and examination of all applications for positions covered by the Personnel Act.

C. Authority

PERSONNEL RULE 2 AAC 07.930 PERSONNEL DUTIES

D. Delegated Examining Authority

- 1) Delegated examining authority is given to the Management Services Unit by the director of the Division of Personnel. The terms and conditions of the delegation are given in writing.
- 2) Examining authority must be exercised in accordance with the Personnel Rules, Alaska Statutes, this Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) Manual and the collective bargaining agreements. The Division of Personnel reserves the right to revise the SOP at any time.
- 3) Delegated examining authority may include some or all of the following:
 - (a) Examine applications for:
 - (1) Residency and citizenship
 - (2) Right to accept employment
 - (3) Eligibility to apply under scope of recruitment
 - (4) Minimum Qualifications
 - (5) Transfer or rehire eligibility
 - (6) Review application packages and:
 - (i) Respond to complaints and appeals per section VI (2 AAC 07.450)
 - (ii) Refuse to examine an applicant under 2 AAC 07.112(a) and (c)
 - (iii) Maintain application files under 2 AAC 07.113

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4) Restrictions

Delegated examining authority does not include:

- (1) Prescribe the forms for application under 2 AAC 07.086
- (2) Disqualification of applicants under 2 AAC 07.112(b)

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