



Coming Soon from the Division of Personnel:

New Electronic Application will Pave the Way for State Job Applicants to Apply Quickly and Easily Online

By: Gary Fogelbach, Pay, Leave & Reporting

What is the electronic application?

The electronic application system is the result of an effort by the Division of Personnel (DOP) to provide a means for applicants to apply for merit system job classes on-line, via the Internet. The application includes the same information requested of applicants in the paper application process, including Veterans' Preference. Questions have been developed to ascertain the applicant's eligibility for a Merit System examination. When a written (multiple choice exam) is required for the job, the applicant will be scheduled to take the test and receive their notification and grade notice by e-mail. The applicant will still need to report to an exam center to take the written exam. When a rating of education and experience determines the applicant's score for a job class, the applicant will be asked questions which elicit their relevant levels of education and work experience for the job, from which a score will be developed and e-mailed to the applicant.

Why is the electronic application being developed?

The need for the electronic application developed out of two almost simultaneous events. A team of agency representatives and DOP staff took a look at ways to improve the hiring process within the merit system. The aim was to leverage technology to speed up and simplify the process for both agencies and applicants, while eliciting a more qualified register of applicants from which hiring managers could select. A recommendation to decentralize hiring to the agencies by removing the top 15 or 15% hiring requirement was reviewed by the DOP, but the law was not changed.

Shortly after the recommendations of this team were handed off to the DOP, the division lost a significant number of personnel analyst positions to layoffs, position elimination and to retirement, as a result of the incentive plan. Very few positions were replaced. Staff within the DOP were re-assigned and trained in additional functions to keep up with the application processing volume. At the same time, the classification demands of the agencies were increasing as agencies began to reconfigure the workforce to cover duties and responsibilities left unattended due to layoffs, position elimination and retirements.

The DOP had to address these concerns and maintain the level of service expected by agencies and applicants. One of the main solutions was the development of an

electronic application. A concern experienced by other states and employers was that application volume increases when an electronic application is used. So the DOP also had to address the manner in which applications were analyzed, i.e., the determination of an applicant's eligibility for a job class and the determination of the applicants score when an education and experience rating is indicated. Other concerns addressed were the amount of time and money spent to examine and communicate with applicants, and the number of classes open for recruitment.

What will happen when the electronic application is implemented?

When the electronic application is implemented, the DOP will communicate with applicants by e-mail instead of the U. S. Postal mail. And, the agencies will have access to the application electronically. Although concerns remain about not all applicants having access to the Internet, and for the security of application information, the DOP believes that they are adequately addressing these concerns. The DOP will be directing applicants to state agencies and libraries where they can complete their application. All information provided over the Internet will be secured through software obtained by the OA Division of Information Services. The DOP expects that some applicants will still apply using a paper application. However, an advantage of the electronic process is that once an applicant completes their core education and work history on-line, they will be able to keep this up-to-date on-line, addressing a concern expressed by many applicants about having to complete a new application every six months. The DOP believes this feature will direct many applicants to the on-line application who would otherwise apply using the paper application process.

The successful implementation of the electronic application will pave the way for state job applicants to apply quickly and easily, allowing state agencies to compete for qualified applicants with other employers throughout the state. It is expected to provide more applicants more quickly for the agencies. It will also help the DOP manage their work load and assign resources to areas of responsibility, such as classification, which currently are understaffed, placing considerable strain on employees and agencies alike.

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