

# EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES: THE HIRING PROCESS

Thank you for your interest in employment with the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC). The Department's primary responsibilities are to regulate hazardous waste management activities; clean up contaminated sites; and support the development of waste reduction, recycling, and treatment as alternatives to land disposal of hazardous waste.

DTSC is part of the California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal/EPA). Cal/EPA was formed to oversee the state's environmental programs and consists of the Air Resources Board, Water Resources Control Board, Integrated Waste Management Board, Department of Toxic Substances Control, Department of Pesticide Regulation, and Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment.

DTSC offices are located in Sacramento, Berkeley, Clovis, and Los Angeles (Glendale and Cypress). The Department employs nearly 1100 staff composed of:

- Scientists with backgrounds in environmental, biological, chemical, physical, soil science, or environmental or public health;
- Engineers with major work in civil, mechanical, chemical, environmental, or waste management engineering;
- Geologists and engineering geologists;
- Industrial hygienists with backgrounds in environmental health, engineering, chemistry, biology, physics, medicine, or public health;
- Toxicologists with major work in toxicology, biochemistry, or pharmacology;
- Special investigators;
- and other administrative, management and clerical classifications.

The following information is intended to familiarize you with the civil service examination/hiring procedures that must be followed to obtain employment with DTSC and most other state agencies. The examination and hiring process consists of five basic steps -- the submission of an application, the examination process, obtaining employment list eligibility, the hiring interview, and the

probationary employment period. Following is a brief explanation of each process identified.

## **1. SUBMISSION OF AN APPLICATION**

All candidates for a civil service examination must complete an examination application (California State Examination/Employment Application Form 678). These may be obtained by contacting any California state department, the State Personnel Board (SPB), or the Employment Development Department (EDD).

Candidates can learn more about examinations through SPB's website at [www.spb.ca.gov](http://www.spb.ca.gov), and/or accessing the new examination webserver at [exams.spb.ca.gov](http://exams.spb.ca.gov), or by calling SPB at (916) 445-0538. If you reside in California, examination information can be accessed by visiting local SPB or EDD offices.

An "examination bulletin" or announcement is issued for each civil service examination. It contains pertinent information such as final filing date (last date to file your application with the testing agency), where to file your application, salary, type of examination, location of positions, knowledges and abilities required for successful performance in this classification, and minimum qualifications. To compete in an examination, the candidate must possess the minimum qualifications noted on the examination bulletin. After completing the (Form 678) application, mail or hand deliver the application to the address indicated on the examination bulletin by the final filing date listed. Late applications are not accepted.

Some exams are administered on a "continuous" basis with a fixed final filing date. For these exams applications will be accepted on a continuous basis.

## **2. THE EXAMINATION PROCESS**

Once filed, your application will be thoroughly reviewed to determine if you meet the minimum qualifications for the classification. It is critical that you provide all information requested (such as month, day, year of hire at any given position in order to be credited the correct amount of time at each position, and any relevant experience whether paid for or voluntary).

After your application is reviewed, you will receive notification by mail regarding your eligibility, and if successful, a notice of interview or examination date will follow.

If you have not provided sufficient information or do not meet minimum qualifications you will receive a notice of rejection. You will be granted time in

which to reply with additional information should it be necessary for re-review of your qualifications.

Examinations may consist of several tests or a single test. The examination announcement will describe the testing method to be used for each classification. The most common types of tests are the oral and written test. Oral tests generally consist of a panel of three people who will ask you specific questions regarding the knowledges and abilities that are listed on the examination bulletin. They may also ask you specific questions regarding your education and experience and their relation to the classification being tested.

*An oral exam is not a "hiring interview" (see #4 below). The oral exam in this phase measures your competitiveness for the specific classification, while the hiring interview gauges your competitiveness for a specific job or position.*

Written tests typically consist of multiple choice questions. Other types of examinations are; education and experience, supplemental application, skills tests (such as typing and driving), and physical ability (such as swimming, lifting, and running). Each department determines the testing method that is most suitable for the classification being tested. Departments may revise the testing methods to better meet its needs if the circumstances under which the examination was planned change. In this instance all competitors will be notified.

### **3. OBTAINING EMPLOYMENT LIST ELIGIBILITY**

If you are successful in the testing process, your name will be placed on an employment list in score order with like scores ranked. For example, if a score of 94 is the highest score, all candidates receiving 94 are placed in rank 1; if 91 is the second highest score, all candidates receiving 91 are placed in rank 2.

Customarily hiring authorities are allowed to interview and/or hire candidates within the top three ranks. Successful candidates can remain on a list for 1 to 4 years, unless otherwise stated on the bulletin.

### **4. THE HIRING INTERVIEW**

Candidates within a reachable rank (first 3 ranks) are immediately eligible to apply for vacant positions. At this point the department will normally send eligible applicants an "employment inquiry". An employment inquiry tells candidates that a position is available and asks if applicants are interested in applying for (or declining consideration) for a specific position within the department. Typically, the candidates must respond with 7 days.

Candidates may also apply directly to hiring supervisors for vacant positions. Applications received by the final filing date will be reviewed and the candidates will be notified of their interview date, location, and time.

At this stage candidates are interviewing for a specific position. For that reason, the hiring interview is more job specific than the examination interview. Usually, the hiring supervisor and several other managers will conduct this personal interview, ask several job-related questions specific to the position, and select the individual which is the best match.

## **5. THE PROBATIONARY EMPLOYMENT PERIOD**

Once you have been selected or hired to fill a specific position, as a new State civil service employee you will be required to serve a probationary period ranging from six to twelve months. Within the probationary period you will be given performance evaluations which are intended to inform you on your progress in your position and point out any particular strong points or deficiencies. When you have successfully completed your probationary period you will be a permanent civil service employee.

I hope this information is helpful to you. Good luck in your employment endeavors, and again thank you for your interest in DTSC.

The State of California provides equal employment opportunity to all; regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, ancestry, sex, marital status, disability, religious or political affiliation, age, sexual orientation, or medical condition.

It is an objective of the State of California to achieve a drug-free state workplace. Any applicant for state employment will be expected to behave in accordance with this objective because the use of illegal drugs is inconsistent with the law of the State, the rules governing civil service, and the special trust placed in public servants.