California Department of Human Resources
Merit System Services
Memorandum

TO: Department Directors

SUBJECT:	REFERENCE NUMBER:
Selection Process Requirements for MSS Program Positions	2022-003
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October 20, 2022	

This memorandum should be forwarded to:

> Human Resources Directors
> Personnel Officers
> HR Analysts

FROM: California Department of Human Resources
           Merit System Services (MSS) Program

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This policy memorandum sets forth the requirements and guidelines for the selection process for positions in Interagency Merit System (IMS) counties under the authority of the Merit System Services (MSS) Program.

Consistent with merit system standards, county departments are required to administer at least one competitive examination as part of the selection process for Program positions.

Effective January 1, 2023, the MSS Program will no longer accept requests to waive examinations during the selection process for program positions.

EXAMINATION REQUIREMENTS

Examinations for the establishment of eligible lists shall be competitive and of such character as fairly to test and determine the qualifications, fitness, and ability of competitors to perform the duties of the class or position for which they seek appointment. All examinations are required to meet MSS selection standards of validity and job-relatedness through linkage to a valid job analysis (JA). Further, the merit selection process requires that the examination tool and job-related rating criteria be developed prior to reviewing or examining any individual application.

The following types of examinations may be used:

- Oral Interview/Qualifications Appraisal Panel (QAP)

- Written Examination

- Work Sample/Performance Test

- Supplemental Questionnaire

- Training and Experience Evaluation (T&E)

The MSS program maintains job analyses and readily available written and/or oral examinations for all MSS classifications. If another selection tool is desired, the county department must notify their MSS Analyst in advance and provide the names of Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) to work with the MSS program to develop the new examination. The new examination shall be created prior to the recruitment being advertised.

For counties with county-specific classifications, the MSS program recommends using the comparable MSS classification if one exists.

USE OF MSS EXAMINATIONS FOR COUNTY SPECIFIC CLASSIFICATIONS

For counties seeking the use of MSS examinations to fill vacancies for their county-specific classifications, the county personnel department must submit documentation showing valid linkage between the JA for the county specific classification and the examination for the MSS classification which they seek to use.

For example: Say Sacramento County Department of Social Services has a county specific classification entitled *Social Worker I, High Risk Community, Sacramento County* but the county would like to use the MSS *Social Worker I* examination to fill their vacancies. The class specifications are different, but Sacramento County feels they are similar enough to show relatedness. In order to request approval to use the MSS Social Worker I examination, Sacramento County must document the relatedness (linkage) of their county specific classification's valid JA to the MSS classification specification as follows:

KSA #	County JA KSA Statement	Linking County JA Task #	Linking MSS Class Spec KSA #
1.	Knowledge of State and County rules and regulations governing the shelter and dependent children.	1, 3, 7, 12 *This column lists all applicable tasks identified through the JA process that directly relate to the county specific classification KSA's.*	1-3, 5, 9, 15 *This column lists all applicable KSAs from the MSS classification that directly relate to the county specific classification KSA's identified through the*

			JA process.
2.	Ability to protect the confidentiality of dependent children and their families.	1-7, 15, 18	1-9, 12-14, 17, 20

Requests to use MSS examinations for county specific classifications, along with substantiating linking documentation, must be submitted to the MSS Analyst assigned to your county prior to requesting to utilize an MSS examination for a county-specific classification.

Requests to use MSS examinations for county-specific classifications without submission of a valid JA will be denied.

JOB ANALYSIS REQUIREMENTS

The Merit Principles require that the recruitment, selection, and advancement of employees is on the basis of their relative knowledge, skill, and ability (KSA), including open consideration of qualified applicants for initial appointment. The JA is the foundation for identifying the KSAs required for a specific classification and developing and administering valid job-related examination processes.

The JA shall serve as the primary basis for demonstrating and documenting the job-relatedness of examination processes conducted for the establishment of eligible lists. Further, JAs conducted for county specific classifications shall adhere to the legal and professional standards, including the Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection, outlined in this memorandum, and county personnel departments shall ensure that the following elements are included in JA studies conducted:

- The JA must be performed for the classification for which the subsequent examination is developed and used.
- The JA methodology utilized must be described and documented.
- Final data from the JA must be presented in writing.
- The JA data should be collected from a variety of current sources (e.g., literature review, incumbent input, supervisor input).
- The sample size and group of subject matter expert participants in the data collection activities must be representative of the jobs within the job classification for which the JA is conducted, as well as be of sufficient size to yield adequate data.
- Job tasks must be specified in terms of their importance or criticality and their frequency of performance, as well as a determination of the essential job tasks.
- Job tasks must be sufficiently detailed to derive the requisite KSAs.
- The important or critical KSAs required upon entry for successful job performance must be specified.
- The KSAs must be operationally defined; for example, the general KSA "typing skill" should be expanded to "skill to type general business correspondence at a

rate of no less than 60 words per minute using a computer and word processing software up to six hours per day".

- There must be a linkage between the essential tasks and the important, required-upon-entry KSAs and the class specification KSAs.
- The JA must have been validated within the preceding five years.

It is incumbent on county personnel departments to ensure that their JA studies comply with the aforementioned requirements to ensure the integrity and job-relatedness of their examination processes for county specific classifications.

As a resource, MSS has created and attached a Job Analysis Template and JA-Class Spec Linking Template to this policy memorandum.

Additional Job Analysis Resources

- CalHR Job Analysis Manual
- O*NET, The Occupational Information Network
- Job-Analysis.net
- Uniform Guidelines on Employees Selection Procedures
- APA Help Center - Psychology at Work

JOB POSTING REQUIREMENTS

The examination method, process, and length of eligibility are required to be listed on the job posting. County departments are prohibited from modifying the selection process listed on the job posting once it has been advertised.

CONTINUOUS RECRUITMENTS

Job postings advertised as continuous shall be required to utilize the same examination for the duration of the recruitment. As a best practice, the MSS Program recommends that advertisements for continuous recruitments do not exceed a period of 12 months.

Continuous recruitments currently advertised must be closed prior to the effective date of this policy. If the need to fill the position(s) still exists, the county department shall exhaust the current eligible list before requesting to re-open the recruitment. A list is considered exhausted when the county has updated the candidate's status on the eligible list. If re-opened, the recruitment must comply with the provisions of this policy.

ELIGIBLE LIST REQUIREMENTS

Eligible lists established as the result of a competitive examination shall be valid for the length of time specified on the job posting. Counties are required to update the candidate status on the eligible list in the Online Hiring Center (OHC) within NEOGOV when selecting a candidate for interview, rejection, or hiring. All candidates on the eligible list must have an updated status before the eligibility list will be considered exhausted. Requests to administer a new examination for a classification with an active eligible list prior to the expiration date will be denied without reasonable justification and

substantiating documentation.

INTERVIEW REQUIREMENTS

County departments shall consider for interview all candidates listed on the eligible list. Secondary screening, including application screening criteria, may be used to screen candidates on the eligible list to identify an interview pool. If a secondary screening method is used, the county department shall clearly document the criteria, the job-relatedness, and how it was applied. This documentation shall be subject to inspection by the MSS program upon request. As a resource, MSS has developed and attached the Application Screening Criteria Template for use as a method of documenting application screening.

Please direct questions regarding information provided in this memorandum to MSSProgram@calhr.ca.gov.

/s/Alysa Stockdale-Hollis

Alysa Stockdale-Hollis, Manager
MSS Program

Attachments:
Job Analysis Template
JA-Class Spec Linking Template
Application Screening Criteria Template