



CIVIL SERVICE 101 - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

Must I be a resident of New York in order to be eligible for employment with the City?

- *Some City positions require New York City residency while other positions do not. Be sure to check the Notice of Examination for information concerning residency requirements.*

Do I have to be a citizen of the United States to obtain a job with the City of New York?

- *Any citizenship requirement will be set forth in the Notice of Examination. When citizenship is not required, non-citizens must be able to establish at the time of appointment and throughout the period of their employment that they are legally permitted to work in the United States under the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986. Each candidate must be able to prove his/her identity and his/her right to obtain employment in the United States prior to employment with the City of New York.*

Is there an age requirement to obtain a job with the City of New York?

- *Persons who have not reached their eighteenth birthday must obtain employment certificates as required by law before appointment. However, for some titles, candidates must have reached their 20th or 21st birthday by the time they are appointed to the position. For example: For Environmental Police Officer, a candidate can take the test at the age of 16 ½ but cannot be appointed until they have reached the age of 20.*

I was convicted of a crime. Can I still obtain employment with the City of New York?

- *Unfair discrimination against persons previously convicted of one or more criminal offenses is prohibited UNLESS there is a direct relationship between the offense(s) and the employment sought. The granting of the employment would involve an unreasonable risk to property or the safety or welfare of specific individuals or the general public.*

Explain Special Accommodations

- *If you have a medically-documented disability (need more time to take an exam, an audio recording of an exam, a large print exam booklet, etc.), you can request a special accommodation. Please refer to the Special Circumstances Guide.*

Do I need identification with me on the day I take a test?

- *Yes. You are required to bring one (1) form of valid (non-expired) signature and photo bearing identification to the test site. The name that was used to apply for the exam must match the first and last name on the photo ID. If you do not have an acceptable ID, you may be denied testing. Acceptable forms of identification (bring one) are as follows: State issued driver's license, State issued identification card, US Government issued Passport, US Government issued Military Identification Card, US Government issued Alien Registration Card, Employer ID with photo, or Student ID with photo.*

Is there prep material for exams?

- *DCAS does not endorse any study guides or test prep material, including material prepared by and distributed by Unions. Instead, each NOE provides information related to the areas being tested on the exam. Refer to the "Test" section of the NOE.*



Office of Citywide Recruitment

If I fail an exam, can I retake the exam?

- Yes, just not the same exam #. You may only take each exam number once. If you take a test with the same exam number more than once, only your first test will be rated and your additional filing fee will not be refunded. For example: You take Police Officer, Exam 1000 but did not pass the exam. You cannot retake Police Officer, Exam 1000, but can take Police Officer, Exam 1001.

How many people are on the Test Validation Board (TVB)?

- 3: One person nominated by the Agency for which the title serves, one person from the Union that represents persons who are employed in the title being tested, and one person representing DCAS who works in the Bureau of Examinations.

Can I request a refund for an exam?

- As per the NYC DCAS General Examination Regulations, an applicant who was unable to take or complete an examination may apply for refund of the application fee by submitting a written request to the Examining Service Section of the Department of Citywide Administrative Services within 30 days of the date of the first test in the examination at which he or she was unable to appear with verification that such absence was due to: compulsory attendance before a court or other public body or official having the power to compel attendance; hospitalization; a clear error or mistake for which the Department of Citywide Administrative Services is responsible.

What happens when there is a tie in score on a civil service exam?

- Ties are broken by the last 4 digits of your Social Security Number.

What is the passing grade for an exam?

- Most tests require a passing score of 70%.

How long will it take to get my score?

- Eligible lists are established, on average, within 9-12 months after the examination date. You will be notified by mail of your test results.

Can a list expire before you are hired?

- Yes. Being on an eligible list does not guarantee employment. All appointments are based on the hiring needs of a City agency or agencies. Your eligible list number may not be reached and therefore, you may not be appointed from the eligible list.

What is the 1-in-3 rule?

- In order to fill one vacancy (or replace one provisional), DCAS will "certify" to an Agency the names of the three highest scoring people still on an eligible list. An Agency may consider all three candidates, and can select any one of them, even the third-highest scorer (the "1-in-3" Rule).

If you work with the City (Contractual appointment) can you take a promotional exam?

- No. Contractual employment with the City is based on the length of a written contract. When the contract ends, employment with the City ceases as well. Promotional exams are only open to persons who hold permanent (not provisional) civil service titles (and not hired via contract).



Office of Citywide Recruitment

If a candidate on an Open Competitive list scored higher than a provisional serving in the title who will get picked first?

- *If you pass the multiple-choice test, your name will be placed in final score order on an eligible list and you will be given a list number. If someone scores higher than a person serving provisionally in the title, the person with the highest score will be appointed first. As a reminder: If you meet all requirements and conditions, you will be considered for appointment when your name is reached on the eligible list. Passing the exam does not guarantee employment.*

What is the 55-a Program?

- *The City of New York encourages employment of persons with disabilities. Most positions in City government require taking a written competitive civil service exam. Section 55-a of the New York Civil Service Law allows qualified persons with disabilities to be appointed to such competitive civil service positions without having to take the exam. That individual, if appointed, would be appointed as a non-competitive employee. The New York State Office of the Adult Career and Continuing Education Services - Vocational Rehabilitation (ACCES-VR) certifies persons as physically or mentally disabled and makes determinations as to whether the individuals are qualified to satisfactorily perform the duties of the position sought. There is no guarantee of receiving an interview or a position. Appointments through the 55-a Program are discretionary for each City agency. The law limits the number of 55-a positions in the City to 700.*

What are Veterans' Credits?

- *In accordance with NYS Civil Service Law, veterans of the U.S. Armed forces are entitled to additional points to be added to a passing score. Candidates may use Veterans' or Disabled Veterans' Credit only once for appointment or promotion. Veterans' or Disabled Veterans' credit will be added only to the final score of those candidates who pass all parts of the examination.*

What are legacy credits?

- *Legacy credits allows 10 additional points to be added to the final score of any applicant with a parent who has died while in discharge of his or her duties as a Police Officer or Firefighter; and a candidate who is the sibling of a Police Officer or Firefighter who was killed in service of New York City as a result of the World Trade Center attack on September 11, 2001, or a candidate who is the child of an FDNY EMS member who was killed in the service of New York City as a result of the World Trade Center attack on September 11, 2001.*

Will I receive a pension as a City employee?

- *Pension plan membership rules, costs, rights, and retirement benefits vary from plan to plan. The City of New York offers its employees opportunities to become pension members through various systems. Your title and agency determine which pension covers you. The New York Employees' Retirement System (NYCERS) is the largest of the five pension systems within New York City.*

Do I receive credit as a provisional employee?

- *No credit in a promotion examination shall be granted to any person for any time served as a provisional appointee in the position to which promotion is sought or in any similar position. However, your seniority, even as a provisional employee, remains in effect from your first day of employment with the City. You will not lose seniority as a provisional employee.*