



Information obtained from: <http://jobs.ca.gov/GeneralInfo/FAQ>

## FAQs

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## NON-STATE EMPLOYEE EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION

### GETTING STARTED

**1. How can I find out about working for the State in a specific job?**

The "Career Planning Tab" has [class specifications](#) for every classification. Simply select "Classification Specifications". Once you have identified the classification that you are interested in, you can start searching for open exam bulletins using the search feature on the homepage.

**2. I am looking for a specific exam and can't find it. What should I do?**

All examinations that are given by the State Personnel Board are listed on this website. Additionally, most other State departments post their open examinations here; however, they are not required to do so. To locate other State departments' examinations, you should either look on their website or contact their testing office directly. Not all exams are given continuously, so you should check back often to ensure that you do not miss an exam opportunity.

**3. How can I get assistance with my job search?**

The State Personnel Board (SPB) offers a seminar in Sacramento to help individuals seeking employment with the State of California. In addition, SPB's Service Center is open during normal business hours to assist individuals in seeking State employment. For more information, please see the links below.

- [Lunchtime seminars](#)
- [Map to Service Center location](#)

## APPLYING FOR A STATE EXAMINATION

### 1. Do I have to be a US citizen to work for the State?

Generally, only a few State jobs (mostly peace officers) require U.S. citizenship. You must have the necessary work visas and meet all requirements set forth by the Immigration and Naturalization Service to be eligible to work in the United States.

### 2. Do I have to be able to speak English to work for the state?

The State of California does not conduct examinations in any languages other than English. You must be able to read, write, and speak English to the extent necessary to perform the essential functions of the job. The test you take serves as a measure of your ability to do so. The State has a number of positions designated as bilingual, for which people with language skills, including American Sign Language, are hired. You must first be on the eligible list for the classification and be successful in a bilingual proficiency exam given by the hiring department to be considered for a bilingual position.

### 3. Can I use a college degree from a foreign country?

Yes; however, the State of California only recognizes degrees from accredited educational institutions. To find out if an institution of higher education is accredited, use the following resources:

- **Western United States:** The Western Association of Schools and Colleges is one of six regional accrediting associations in the United States. The Association provides assistance to schools located in California, Hawaii, Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas, American Samoa, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Fiji, and East Asia.
  - [List of accredited senior colleges and universities](#)
  - [List of accredited community and junior colleges](#)
- **California:** [List of schools approved by the California Bureau of Private Post-Secondary Education](#)
- **United States:** [Federal Department of Education Database of Accredited Postsecondary Institutions and Programs](#)
- **International:** [International Association of Universities](#)

### 4. Am I required to provide my Social Security Number on my applications?

Providing this is voluntary in accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974 (PS 93-579). However, the Social Security Number is required for purposes of granting Veterans' Preference Points and Career Credits, and to check for eligibility for promotional examinations.

## PREPARING TO TAKE A STATE TEST

### 1. How do I know what will be on the test?

Read the exam bulletin section "Examination Information" for the type of test(s) given, (e.g., written, oral test/interview, training and experience), how each test will be weighted (e.g., pass/fail, percentage of final test score), and the scope of the exam, including knowledge, skills, and abilities, required to perform the job. Refer to the knowledge, skills and abilities on the bulletin.

## TYPING TESTS

### 1. How do I take a typing test?

Please review the following link: [Typing Certification Tests](#).

## ELIGIBILITY AND VACANCIES

### 1. How do I find out what exams I have taken?

You can view/print what lists you are on through your profile tab located at the top of the homepage.

### 2. How do I change my information on an eligible list?

You can change your eligibility information from the "My Profile Tab" by clicking at the top of the homepage. You can change your address, phone number(s), email address, employment preference locations, and place yourself active or inactive on a list.

## OTHER QUESTIONS

### 1. What health, medical, vision, dental and other benefits are available to State employees?

Please review benefits information from the [Department of Personnel Administration](#).

### 2. What programs are available for persons with disabilities?

If you are a person with a disability who (1) has a physical or mental impairment or medical condition that limits one or more major life activities; (2) has a record or history of such impairment or medical conditions, or; (3) is regarded as having such an impairment or medical condition, you may wish to participate in the State Personnel Board's Limited Examination and Appointment Program (LEAP), authorized by Government Code sections 19240-19243.4.

For additional information, please refer to the links below.

- [Information for Persons with Disabilities](#)
- [LEAP \(Limited Examination and Appointment Program\)](#)

### 3. I previously worked for the Legislature. Am I required to take an examination to work for the State of California?

Yes. Employees of the Legislature are not part of the State of California civil service system. However, there is one exception for former employees of the California State Legislature with two or more consecutive years of experience to participate in Career Executive Assignment (CEA) examinations within one year of separation from the Legislature, consistent with Government Code section 18990.

### 4. I previously worked for the federal government. Am I required to take an examination to work for the State of California?

Yes. Employees of the federal government are not part of the State of California civil service system.

5. **I work/worked for the California State University (CSU) system or the University of California (UC) system. Do I have to take an exam to work for the State of California?**

Yes. Employees of the CSU and UC systems are not part of the State of California civil service system. Therefore, they are not eligible to transfer into civil service positions, and must take a State exam if interested in State employment.

6. **I work/worked for the county. Do I have to take an exam to work for the State of California?**

Yes. County employees are not part of the State of California civil service system. Therefore, they are not eligible to transfer into civil service positions, and must take a State exam if interested State employment.

## CURRENT AND FORMER STATE EMPLOYEES

The responses to these frequently asked questions are general and INTENDED AS GUIDANCE ONLY. Your situation may differ based on your civil service status, classification, bargaining unit contract, and other factors. You should always contact the department's human resources office for clarification of your particular situation. It is the hiring department's responsibility to provide information about your status, rights, and benefits for which you may qualify.

### CURRENT STATE EMPLOYEES

1. **What classifications can I transfer into other than my current job title?**

Transfers between classifications are acceptable when the two classifications have substantially the same level of duties, responsibilities, and salaries, and are not in the same class series. Other factors are also considered such as the promotional relationship of the two classifications (if any), and State Personnel Board (SPB) or departmental laws, rules, and/or policies that limit the circumstances of transfers into and between certain classifications. Although in most instances it is not necessary to meet the minimum qualifications for the new classification, you are required to possess any professional license, certificate or credential that is a legal requirement for the classification. You should consult your personnel office or the department with the job opening to determine if you can be considered for transfer into another classification. For general information about the transfer process, you can refer to SPB's [transfer salary calculator](#).

2. **Can I transfer from one State department to another without taking an examination?**

You may transfer to another State department without taking an examination if you already qualify for appointment to the classification, and time-base of the other position. For example, if you are a permanent, full-time Office Assistant at your current department, you can be considered for appointment (transfer) to another permanent, full-time Office Assistant position at another State department. You may also qualify to transfer to other positions based on your classification, time-base and salary. You should contact the State department that has the vacancy to determine whether a transfer is appropriate.

3. **If I transfer to another department in the same job classification, do I have to be placed on probation? If so, how long will I be on probation?**

It is at the discretion of the receiving department if you will have to serve a new probationary period. The length of the probationary period generally ranges from six months to one year and can be extended under certain circumstances. You should consult with your human resources office.

4. **If I am on a promotional list for my current department, can I apply for a job opening at another department?**

You may apply for a job opening at another state department if you are on your department's promotional list. The department with the job opening will determine whether or not you qualify to be considered for their job. Determinations for transfer of list eligibility between departments must be approved by both departments after consideration of several factors (e.g., the tests used to establish the two lists are comparable). While you may be on a list for one department, it may not be appropriate for your eligibility to be transferred to another department. Because there are a number of factors considered in making this determination, each request is reviewed and approved on a case-by-case basis.

5. **I laterally transferred to a new department. Can I transfer my promotional list eligibility from my old department to my new department?**

You may request to transfer your promotional list eligibility to your new department; however, approval of your request is not automatic. The department you request to transfer your list eligibility to will review the request and make the determination after consideration of several factors (e.g., the tests used to establish the two lists are comparable).

6. **If I transferred to a new department and my old department is giving a promotional examination for which I qualify, can I take the promotional exam at my old department?**

Under certain circumstances, employees can participate in promotional examinations given by their former department. State Personnel Board rules require that you have had no break in service, and: (a) you have probationary, limited-term or temporary status with the new department; and/or (b) the examination is for an administrative, professional or technical classification and is given within three years of the date you transferred to the new department. There are a number of other instances where individuals who are not current employees of the testing department (e.g. legislative and exempt employees) can qualify to compete in that department's promotional examinations. If you meet the minimum qualifications and you think you might otherwise qualify to take a promotional examination, submit your application to the testing department. If your application is rejected because you are not a current employee of the department, you will have the opportunity to provide them with information as to why you feel you are eligible to take their promotional examination.

7. **How do I find out what upward mobility or promotional opportunities exist in my department?**

Every State department is required by law to establish an effective upward mobility program. This is the planned development and advancement of employees in lower-paying occupations to entry technical, professional and administrative positions in State departments. While State agencies have upward mobility programs, this is a joint responsibility of the employee working with the department. There is no guarantee that any employee who participates in upward mobility activities will receive a promotion. Contact your department's Human Resources Office or your Equal Employment Opportunity/Civil Rights Office for more information.

8. **Can I have two appointments to different positions at the same or different State departments?**

A State employee can hold more than one position in State service in the same or different departments and/or classifications. In order to obtain a second appointment in a classification that is different from your first appointment, you must have eligibility to be appointed to the classification of the second position. For example, if you are an Office Assistant and the second appointment is to an Office Technician position, you must have eligibility for an appointment to office technician. Generally, the departments making the appointments must agree to the second position, and would be required to coordinate your hours and benefits including potential payment of overtime. Even though you may hold more than one position, you cannot accrue benefits or State service time credit in excess of that available to a full-time employee.

**9. Whom should I contact if I need information regarding my employment history?**

You should contact the State Controller's Office to request a copy of your employment history. You must submit a written request to: Work History Unit, Office of the State Controller, P.O. Box 942850, Sacramento, CA 94250. Your letter must include your name/prior name(s), birth date, Social Security Number, classification and department where you last worked, approximate dates worked, and your current address and telephone number. Questions regarding your employment history request should be directed to the State Controllers Office at (916) 445-2636.

**10. Whom should I contact if I have questions regarding my employment or personnel file?**

You should contact the personnel office of the State department where you are currently employed or where you were last employed to obtain information regarding your employment or personnel file.

**11. If I work part-time and want to increase my time-base, can I apply for full-time positions?**

You can increase your time-base if you meet the following criteria: (a) previously held a full-time position in the same or comparable classification; (b) you were previously eligible and reachable for a full-time appointment from an employment list; or (c) have worked the required time (1,920 hours or 2 calendar years) in the same classification as the full-time position. Contact your hiring department for help in making this determination.

**12. I work for the State and took an open examination. Do I get Career Credits for being a State employee?**

You may acquire Career Credits for certain open, non-promotional examinations if you currently hold a permanent appointment within State civil service. The exam bulletin will specify whether or Career Credits apply to the examination. If you have any questions, contact the testing department directly.

**13. How do I find out about Career Executive Assignments (CEA) exams?**

Please follow this link: [CEA Examination Information](#).

**14. If I used to work for the State of California, can I apply for jobs, or do I need to take a test?**

It may not be necessary for you to take another State examination to reenter State government employment. Reinstatement is possible if you previously held a State civil service position as a permanent or probationary employee, and separated from your position by (1) resignation, (2) service retirement, (3) absence without leave (AWOL), (4) accepting another civil service or exempt appointment without a break in continuity of State service, (5) termination from a limited-term, temporary, Career Executive Assignment, or exempt appointment, or (6) termination for failure to meet conditions of employment. You may be permissively reinstated without having to take another examination to a classification and time base in your previously worked classification or into a class in to which you are able to transfer (see [Transfer and Reinstatement](#)). If you wish to reinstate, it is your responsibility to seek your own job within State civil service.

**15. Is there a time limit on how long I can wait until I request to reinstate to a State job, and what is the process?**

There is no time limit for permissive reinstatement eligibility. If you are eligible to reinstate, based on the reason(s) for your separation from State service, you can request permissive reinstatement at any time. If you have any questions regarding your eligibility for reinstatement, you should request a copy of your employment history (refer to Question 9 below to find out about obtaining your employment history). When you submit your application for a vacant position, you should indicate you are applying

based on your permissive reinstatement eligibility. The department to whom you submit your application will determine if you are eligible for consideration (see [Transfer and Reinstatement](#)).

16. **If I reinstate to the same job classification I had before I separated from State service, do I have to serve a new probationary period?**

It is at the discretion of the receiving department where there you will have to serve a new probationary period. The length of the probationary period generally ranges from six months to one year and can be extended under certain circumstances. You should consult with your Human Resources Office.

17. **If I was a part-time employee when I resigned, can I apply for full-time positions?**

A person reinstating must have reinstatement eligibility for the time base as well as the tenure and classification. For example, if you held a full-time position for the same classification at sometime prior to your separation, you can be reinstated to a full-time position. If you have never held a full-time position in that classification, you can only be reappointed to a part-time or intermittent time-base position based on your employment history. However, if you (a) can demonstrate that you were previously eligible and reachable for a full-time appointment off an employment list; or (b) have worked the required number of hours (1,920) over the required period of time (two years) in the same classification as the full-time position, you may qualify for a time-base change on the date of appointment. The hiring department will make this determination.

18. **Will I get all of my benefits, State service credits, and leave balances back when I reinstate to a State job?**

Contact the hiring department's Human Resources Office.

19. **I was on a promotional list for my department when I resigned from State service. Can I have my eligibility restored to the list when I reinstate?**

State Personnel Board rule allows an employee who, within six months of his/her separation, reinstates to a permanent appointment to request that he/she again be eligible for certification for employment lists that apply to the employee's new status.

20. **If I was dismissed from State service, can I apply for State jobs, or do I have to take an examination?**

If an employee is dismissed from State service by adverse action or as a result of disciplinary proceedings, he/she loses eligibility to reinstate back to civil service without the need to successfully pass a State examination. Additionally, the employee is prohibited from taking any civil service examination or to be certified for any position in State civil service without the approval of the State Personnel Board's Executive Officer. Requests to participate in open examinations must be submitted in writing to the State Personnel Board.

21. **If I had an adverse action before I resigned from State service, will it affect me from reinstating to another State job?**

An adverse action, other than a dismissal or disciplinary proceeding that resulted in a non-voluntary separation from State service, can affect your reinstatement rights. You should review the adverse action, the stipulation agreement, hearing decision, or other documentation that was related to your adverse action or resignation. If there is nothing to bar you from employment with the State, a particular department or classification, your permissive reinstatement rights may not be affected.

22. **If I used to work for the State and want to get a copy of employment history, how do I obtain it?**

If you were employed less than five years ago, you should contact your former department's Human Resource Office for a copy of your Official Personnel Record. In addition, you can obtain a copy of your work history from the State Controller's Office, Employment History Unit, P.O. Box 942850, Sacramento, CA 94250. Your letter must include your name/prior name(s), birth date, Social Security Number, classification and department where you last worked, approximate dates worked, and your current address and telephone number. Questions regarding your employment history request should be directed to the State Controller's Office at (916) 445-2636 Monday through Friday, 8:00am to 5:00pm.

**23. If I retired from State service, can I return to work for the State?**

Under certain situations, you can return to work for the State. The California Public Employees Retirement System (CalPERS) is the policy agency regarding retirement and benefits. CalPERS has a number of references regarding employment after retirement and reinstatement from retirement. There are some restrictions you need to know about, so you will not jeopardize your CalPERS service, disability, or industrial disability retirement benefits. Please visit the [CalPERS forms and publications center](#) for more information.

## STUDENT EMPLOYMENT

**1. Do California State departments offer internships or part-time employment for college students?**

Many State departments use paid and unpaid interns and part-time student assistants. Interns and students do not require a test. Interested candidates must be currently enrolled in an accredited college and can directly submit their applications to the address indicated on the vacancy announcement. Use the following links for current opportunities.

- [State Personnel Board \(SPB\)](#)
- [The Community College Foundation \(CCF\)](#)
- [University Enterprises, Inc. \(UEI\)](#)

For hiring agencies, SPB, in conjunction with the Board of Equalization created a [Student Internship Program Guide](#) for information and reference.

**2. Do I get State service credit for the time I worked as a Student Assistant when I get a permanent job with the State?**

Typically, State departments hire Student Assistants using two different options.

**Option #1:** The department advertises their own vacancies and hires their student assistants into the civil service Student Assistant classification. Students hired in this manner are normally entitled to the following benefits:

- Earned State service credit
- Earned vacation/sick leave
- Earned holidays and holiday credit
- Direct deposit
- Jury duty leave
- Military leave

However, Student Assistants are not typically entitled to the following:

- Health
- Dental
- Vision

- State Disability Insurance, Non-Industrial Disability Leave or Industrial Disability Leave
- Bereavement leave
- Leave of absence
- Personal Holiday
- Probationary period

Please review benefit information from the [Department of Personnel Administration](#).

**Option #2:** The department hires their Student Assistants through a partnership program with a local college(s). Many State agencies use [University Enterprises Inc.](#) (UEI) and the [Community College Foundation](#) (CCF) when filling their Student Assistant vacancies. It is important to understand that UEI/CCF Student Assistant positions are part-time, **non-benefited** positions. UEI Student Assistants are not eligible for any State benefits, including any type of leave accruals, health benefits, and service credit.