

Rule II. Recruitment, Applications, and Examinations

A. Personnel Program, General Policy

It shall be the continuing policy of Pinellas County that the substance, design and administration of its personnel program shall assure the fair treatment of applicants and employees in all aspects for personnel administration without regard to political affiliation, age, race, color, national origin, sex, or religious creed, and with proper regard for their privacy and constitutional rights as citizens. Upon request for inspection and/or copying by any person of the personnel file(s) or job application(s) of an employee of or applicant for employment by Pinellas County, whether maintained by the Human Resources Department or other department(s), the Human Resources Department or other department shall, to the extent possible, notify the employee or applicant of the request and make said files and applications available for inspection and/or copying at reasonable times and under reasonable conditions. The inspection and/or copying of such files and applications shall be made in the Human Resources Department, under the supervision of the Human Resources Director or designee. The employee or applicant shall have the right to be present at said inspection and/or copying.

B. Application for Employment

No person responding to public notice shall be denied the opportunity of filing an application for employment with the County, and all such applications shall be made on standard forms designed and prepared by the Director of Human Resources and approved by the Personnel Board.

C. Rejection of Applications

The rejection of applications shall be objectively based on failure to meet any of the announced requirements, prior unsatisfactory employment in the County Service, giving false information concerning past employment history or conviction record, prior conviction for a crime if the crime was a felony or first degree misdemeanor and directly related to the position of employment sought, or for other just cause.

D. Announcement of Examinations

Unless vacancies shall be filled by demotion, transfer, or by certification from layoff eligible lists, they shall be filled so far as practical by the promotion of employees in the Classified Service. The Director of Human Resources shall in such case, upon recommendation of the Department Heads or other Appointing Authority of the various departments concerned, establish an open competitive examination or a promotional examination to be conducted among the eligible employees of the department or departments in which vacancies exist. If the vacancy cannot be filled through promotion, the Director of Human Resources shall make public announcement of open competitive examination in advance of the date fixed for closing the filing of applications, and such examination shall be advertised in a major newspaper of general circulation published in the County. The Director of Human Resources may also give public notice of examinations for County employment through radio, television, the posting of bulletins, or through other appropriate means of advertising necessary to bring the notice of examination to the attention of the prospective applicants. Such notice shall set forth the job requirements and the time and place at which applications for employment may be filed. If an Appointing Authority is actively engaged in a reduction in force, the Director of Human Resources shall, upon recommendation of the Appointing Authority or another Appointing Authority, establish a RIF examination and shall announce the examination to all employees of the Unified Personnel System.

E. Cancellation of Examination

The Director of Human Resources may cancel, postpone, reschedule, or reannounce any examination for any good and sufficient reasons deemed in the best interest of the County Service.

F. Examinations

All appointments, except to those positions exempted by the Personnel Board, to the Classified Service, either at the entrance or promotional level, shall be made on the basis of merit and fitness, to be determined as far as practical and possible by competitive examination, except that an incumbent may be promoted to an upgraded position without examination or by a noncompetitive examination upon recommendation of the Appointing Authority and concurrence of the Personnel Board.

Whenever vacancies exist or are contemplated in the Classified Service, the Director of Human Resources shall prepare and administer standard level examinations which may consist of any, all, or a combination of the following tests designed to fairly and impartially test the merit, fitness, aptitude, experience, and other relative qualifications of an applicant to discharge the duties of the classification in which he seeks appointment:

1. Written Test
2. Oral Test
3. Performance Test
4. Physical or Medical Test
5. Evaluation of Training and Experience
6. Seniority
7. Any other applicable criteria which will fairly measure the relative abilities of individuals competing in examinations.

G. Types of Examination

Examinations may be assembled or unassembled and shall be announced in the following manner:

1. Open Competitive

Any examination in which competition is open to the public, providing they meet the announced requirements for admission to the examination.

2. Promotional

Any examination in which competition is limited to present employees with probationary, or permanent status in a lower job classification, providing they meet the announced requirements for admission to the examination.

3. RIF

Any examination during which the Appointing Authorities are actively engaged in a reduction in force and in which the competition is limited to present classified employees with probationary or permanent status, exempt employees who are to be impacted by the reduction in force, and former classified and exempt employees who have been separated from County service through lay off and whose separation date is less than six months from the closing date of the recruitment.

4. Noncompetitive

Any examination which is approved by the Personnel Board, upon the recommendation of the appropriate Appointing Authority, for an individual employee whose position has been reclassified.

H. Seniority Points - Application of Same

In computing scores for seniority in a promotional examination, the total length of continuous service immediately prior to the examination shall be used with a maximum credit allowance of ten (10) years. Seniority credit shall be granted at the rate of one-fourth (1/4) point for each three (3) months of service completed, and shall be added to the grade of those persons who receive a minimum or above passing grade on the written examination. No credit shall be given for periods of service of less than three (3) months.

I. Veterans' Preference Points - Application of Same

Individuals who are eligible for Veterans' Preference Points in accordance with Chapter 295, Florida Statutes, shall have such points added to their passing examination scores.

J. Results and Review of Examinations

The identity of each candidate shall be concealed during the examination process and, after the grading of examinations, the Human Resources Department shall advise each candidate as to the result of his examination. Within ten (10) days after the receipt of said notice, a candidate receiving such notice may, in the presence of the Director of Human Resources, review his examination question booklet. There shall be no time limit imposed relative to the candidate's re-examination following his review of the examination booklet.

Only where reasonable, extenuating circumstances exist, as determined by the Director of Human Resources, will a candidate be allowed to review his examination papers after the above specified ten (10) day time limit has elapsed. Employees in the Classified Service who are unable to review their examination papers in the above specified ten (10) day time limit because of being on sick or annual leave, or other approved leave, with or without pay, may review their examination papers within ten (10) days after their return to duty.

K. Appeals

Should an employee or new job applicant feel adversely affected or discriminated against in an opportunity for promotion or employment, or believes an injustice has been done in the grading of his/her examination papers, the individual may appeal to the Director of Human Resources. Should the matter not be resolved by the Director of Human Resources, the Pinellas County employee candidate may appeal to the Personnel Board. Any such appeal to the Personnel Board must be made in writing and shall specify the cause of complaint. The Personnel Board shall review the matter and shall render a final decision in the matter.

L. Examination Material Regarded as Confidential

Examination papers and materials are considered to be of a privileged nature and are not available for public inspection, but may be made available to the administrative officials of the County showing good reason why the disclosure of such information would be in the public interest, or to the Personnel Board where such material is pertinent in the case of a hearing.