



UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT
Washington, DC 20415

The Director

Tuesday, August 14, 2001
MSG 2001-59a

MEMORANDUM FOR: Human Resources Directors

FROM: Richard A. Whitford, Acting Associate Director for Employment

Subject: Dual Certification

For all certificates of eligibles issued on or after September 4, 2001, examining offices must "dual certify" applicants. In the Delegated Examining Operations Handbook, we define dual certification as "concurrent referral to more than one position..."

Currently, an agency may choose to publish a single vacancy announcement for multiple grade levels and/or geographic locations, and certify an applicant for each grade and location for which the applicant applied, is eligible and within reach. This practice is optional unless the agency requests a certificate of eligibles to fill a single vacancy at multiple grades, or unless there is a shortage of well-qualified candidates. In these instances, dual certification is required.

Third parties have raised concerns about the optional use of dual certification. Until we have fully reviewed these concerns, applicants must be referred for each grade, occupational specialty and geographic location applied for and for which they are eligible and within reach. Effective September 4 and until further notice, dual certification is mandatory.

Within the next 90 days, we will solicit your input on the impact of this change. Please refer to the attached Questions and Answers for detailed instructions on the implementation of this change. If you have specific questions, please call your local Office of Personnel Management Service Center or Customer Service Office.

Attachment

Dual Certification Questions and Answers

1. What is dual certification?

Certifying applicants for each grade, geographic location and occupational specialty for which they apply, are eligible and within reach.

2. Do we follow the current Delegated Examining Operations Handbook (DEOH) or this memorandum?

Follow this guidance until further notice. We suggest you file this memorandum in your DEOH handbook.

3. Are we to treat each occupational specialty, at each grade, at each geographic location as a separate competition?

Yes. Each occupational specialty, each grade, and each geographic location is a separate opportunity for the applicant to compete. Laws and regulations governing examining apply to each competition.

4. If a register is open for multiple occupational specialties, grades and geographic locations, can an agency limit the number of consideration choices an applicant can make?

No. Agencies must allow applicants to compete for every occupation, grade and geographic location for which they apply. Agencies may limit the number of occupational specialties, grades and geographic locations only through the announcement process.

5. If an objection as described in the Delegated Examining Operations Handbook is approved, is the objection valid for all grades, locations and occupational specialties of the register, or only the individual certificate for which the objection was submitted?

If the objection is approved based on qualifications, the examining office may remove the applicant's name for all positions and locations at the same grade level or higher. If the objection is approved based on 5 CFR parts 339 or 731, the applicant may be removed from the entire register, if appropriate.

6. Can agencies require an applicant to submit a separate application for each grade, occupational specialty and location?

Yes. The vacancy announcement must describe the application requirements.

7. Can examining offices limit the time a candidate has to accept or reject a job offer?

Yes. However, examining offices must allow candidates a reasonable amount of time to respond to job offers. The timeframes cannot be so restrictive as to appear to encourage declinations.

8. Can you give us an example of dual certification?

An individual applies under a vacancy announcement for 5/7/9 positions in Seattle, San Francisco, and Los Angeles. The applicant indicates a desire to be considered for grades 5 and 7 in all three locations. The applicant qualifies for both grades and is within reach for both grades and all three locations. The examining office must certify the applicant on the grade 5 certificate for all three locations, and the grade 7 certificate for all three locations. Each grade and location is to be treated as a separate competition.