



Los Angeles County  
DEPARTMENT OF

**Human Resources**



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## **CIVIL SERVICE RULE REFORM Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

### **General Information**

#### **1. Why is the County changing the Civil Service Rules?**

The County's Civil Service Rules (CSRs), which govern the recruitment and examination process, have remained largely untouched for about the last four decades. Thus, they do not account for many of the regular tools and processes of modern recruitment, such as the widespread use of electronic communication, online job posting sites, and quickly evolving job functions. The CSRs also currently contain outdated terminology, complicated language that is challenging for many applicants to understand, and processes that no longer reflect employment law or best practice. Changes were needed to align the Rules with current employment standards, reduce confusion for readers, and improve the County's hiring processes.

#### **2. When do the revised CSRs take effect?**

The revised CSRs go into effect on May 28, 2026.

#### **3. Where do we find the new rules?**

The ordinance containing the revised Civil Service Rules can be viewed online [HERE](#).

### **Applications and Examinations Process**

#### **4. Do applicants need to reapply for positions where applications were already submitted?**

No action is needed by current applicants. The revisions to the County's CSRs will not result in changes to application standards or examination criteria for job postings that are currently active.

#### **5. Do the changes affect the County's examination process?**

The changes to the CSRs will not impact any examinations or their results if the results (i.e., an eligible list) were promulgated prior to May 28, 2026. However, if the results (i.e., an eligible list) are promulgated on or after May 28, 2026, then they will be subject to the revised rules for banding, reachability, and appeals purposes. In general, the changes to the County's hiring rules will not impact the content or structure of examinations, they simply modernize the authorities to align with current recruitment practices and expectations.

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### **6. Are past examination results still valid under the new rules?**

Yes. Applicants' results that are issued before the changes take effect will not be impacted by the CSR changes.

### **7. How do the CSR revisions affect departmental promotional opportunities for current County employees?**

The CSRs were revised to allow for additional ways to support employees pursuing promotional opportunities in the County.

Candidates who apply for departmental promotional opportunities at their current department and then transfer to another department will remain eligible for selection from departmental promotional lists within their prior department for up to 60 days from their date of transfer (**CSR 6.02.A**). The revised rule gives County employees more flexibility in considering departmental and interdepartmental promotional options.

### **8. How do the CSR revisions affect promotional opportunities for current temporary and recurrent employees?**

Current temporary and recurrent employees may now have the opportunity to qualify for higher-level permanent positions if they have satisfactorily served in their temporary or recurrent position for at least 120 working days (the equivalent of 6 months), or for a period equal to the probationary period for the permanent position with which they share the same classification, whichever is greater. This supports a robust temporary to permanent career pipeline and honors the service already provided by employees holding seasonal or part-time positions (**CSR 6.02.A.2**).

### **9. Do the CSR changes affect the contents of the examination?**

In general, the changes to the County's hiring rules will not impact the content or structure of examinations. However, the revised CSRs allow for increased efficiency throughout the examination process and better reflect current hiring standards. For example, the Appraisal of Promotability (AP) test part is no longer a requirement (although it is still an option) for promotional exams (**CSR 7.13.C**). The CSRs will now also reflect additional exams practices that have become commonplace in modern recruitments, such as multiple choice and aptitude tests (**CSR 7.08**).

### **10. Is the Appraisal of Promotability (AP) still required for promotional exams?**

No, the AP is no longer a requirement for promotional exams, but it remains as an available and valid examination component (**CSRs 7.08.H, 7.13.C C**).

### **11. How have Noncompetitive (NC) examinations changed?**

The revised CSRs modify the NC exams process by not only clarifying when departments may use NC exams but also expanding departments' ability to

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administer NC exams. The rules now ensure that NC exams can be used for situations where competitive testing is not practicable due to the nature of the knowledge, skills, and abilities associated with the job, or for appointments to designated entry-level pipeline programs (e.g., TempLA, Career Development Intern, Youth Worker) **(CSR 8.01)**.

### **12. How does the new CSR definition of “Veteran’s Credit” impact an applicant’s ability to receive the credit?**

It doesn’t! Nothing has changed in terms of eligibility or allocation of veteran’s credit. Qualified candidates will continue to receive a veteran’s credit of 10 percent of total credits to their final **passing** grade in open competitive examinations **(CSR 7.15)**. Applicants must continue to submit the required documentation with each exam application so their eligibility for the credit can be evaluated. The new definition in the CSRs simply provides language consistent with the County Charter **(CSR 2.61)**.

### **13. Temporary or Recurrent employees must have “satisfactorily served” 120 working days or the equivalent of their classification’s probationary period, whichever is greater, to be eligible for promotional examinations for higher-level permanent positions. What does “satisfactorily served” mean?**

“Satisfactorily served” means the recurrent or temporary employee’s work performance must have met the standards and expectations of their position at the end of their qualification period (i.e., either 120 working days, or the equivalent of the probationary period for the permanent position for which they share the same classification, whichever is greater) **(CSR 6.02.A.2)**.

### **14. The revised CSRs require that probationary employees may compete in promotional examinations provided they are not appointed until they have completed their “initial” probationary period. What does “initial” probationary period mean?**

An “initial” probationary period is the probationary period of an employee when they either first enter County employment as a permanent employee or when they return to permanent employment after a break in service **(CSR 6.02.A.1)**.

## **Eligibility Lists**

### **15. Will there be any changes to existing eligible lists?**

Any eligible list issued before the effective date of the revised CSRs (i.e., before May 28, 2026) will retain the score banding that was in effect when applicants were originally notified of their results.

However, as of May 28, 2026, existing lists will be subject to the new CSRs for the purposes of reachability, canvassing, and the appeal process as follows:

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- **Reachability:** The 'Rule of 10' will apply to Open Competitive and Interdepartmental Promotional lists; the 'Rule of 5' remains for Departmental Promotional lists (**CSR 11.01.E**).
- **Canvassing:** Candidates are given a minimum of 3 business days to respond to an offer of a position or interview before a hiring manager can potentially consider other candidates (**CSR 11.04.C**).
- **Appeal Rights:** Candidates have a right to appeal to DHR in 15 business days rather than the previous 10 business days. Also, candidates may appeal to DHR within 15 business days if they were not accepted on a Selective Certification list (**CSR 11.03.C**).

### 16. Will these changes affect how long an eligible list remains open?

The revised CSRs allow hiring departments more flexibility for how long an eligible list may remain active following an examination. While it may be common for an eligible list to remain active for 12 months, some positions may justify shorter or longer timeframes. For instance, recruitments to information technology positions may need to occur every few months, rather than every few years, due to the changing criteria in the field.

The duration of the eligibility list will be identified in the job posting (**CSR 10.06**).

## Banding and Reachability

### 17. What are the changes to the score-banding system?

Previously, applicants who had passed an examination were normally assembled into five (5) separate groups (or bands) with fixed ranges, according to their score on the examination.

With the changes to the Civil Service Rules, the County has revised the default banding structure into three (3) separate groups instead of five (5).

Previous Banding Structure		New Banding Structure	
Band 1	95% - 100%	Band 1	90 - 100%
Band 2	89% - 94%	Band 2	80 - 89%
Band 3	83% - 88%	Band 3	70 - 79%
Band 4	77% - 82%		
Band 5	70% - 76%		

If a candidate passes an examination and receives a score of 70% - 79% on an examination, they are on Band 3 (i.e., "Qualified"). If a candidate receives a score of

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80% - 89% on an examination, they are on Band 2 (i.e., “Well Qualified”). If a candidate receives a score of 90% - 100% on an examination, they are on Band 1 (i.e., “Highly Qualified”). **(CSR 11.01 C)**

### **18. Why is the County changing from a 5-band to 3-band system?**

As a part of the CSR modernization project, DHR conducted an in-depth review of past County examination data to more clearly understand the connection between an applicant’s score and their performance in the role. These studies showed that the existing 5-band structure did not always meaningfully differentiate between candidates. For example, there was no evidence to suggest that a score of 95 (Band 1) was meaningfully different from a score of 94 (Band 2).

The 3-band model has been shown to better represent the qualification of passing applicants, allowing for quicker reachability of the most highly qualified individuals.

### **19. Do departments still need to follow a “reachability” rule?**

Yes, departments must continue to follow ‘reachability’ rules when considering candidates from active Eligible Lists.

For Open Competitive and Interdepartmental Promotional lists, typically the largest volume examinations, the CSRs now allow departments to consider the next band of candidates for employment when the highest band has fewer than 10 candidates (i.e., the “Rule of 10”) . For Departmental Promotional lists, the “Rule of 5” remains applicable, where departments can continue to consider the next band of candidates when the highest band has fewer than 5 candidates **(CSR 11.01 E)**.

To summarize:

- **For Open Competitive and Interdepartmental Promotional lists:** If the top band has fewer than 10 candidates, departments are allowed to consider the next band of candidates (i.e., the “Rule of 10”).
- **For Departmental Promotional lists:** The old “Rule of 5” still applies — if fewer than 5 candidates are in the top band, departments can consider the next band of candidates.

## **Examination Notices and Appeals**

### **20. Have there been any changes to how applicants will be notified of examinations and examination results?**

No. The examination and results notification process will remain the same. However, if a selective certification is established for special skills or other position-specific criteria not tested for within the examination (e.g., geographical preference,

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language skills), all individuals considered will now be notified whether they were placed on the selective certification list **(CSR 11.03)**.

### **21. How is applicants' ability to appeal examination scores changing?**

Applicants will now have more time (15 business days) to appeal an application rejection, examination results, or job rescission **(CSR 7.20)**.

Additionally, the CSRs now require notice to applicants of whether they were placed on selective certification lists, if any are made, and give appeal rights if the applicant believes an error was made in not placing them on the selective certification list.

Candidates who were found not to have met the criteria for placement on a Select Certification list now have an opportunity to appeal the department's decision to the Department of Human Resources within 15 business days of notification of their non-acceptance **(CSR 11.03 C)**.