



# COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

## Personnel Department

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November 13, 2001

Agenda: November 20, 2001

Board of Supervisors  
 County of Santa Cruz  
 701 Ocean Street  
 Santa Cruz, CA 95060

### RECRUITMENT PROCESS REPORT

Dear Members of the Board:

During final budget hearings, your Board directed the Personnel Department to propose changes to the Civil Service Rules and the County Code that would expedite the County's recruitment process. The Personnel Department responded by preparing and submitting a detailed report with recommendations to the Civil Service Commission, which was considered at the Commission's October 17<sup>th</sup> quarterly meeting. The Commission recommends the attached Rule and Code changes to your Board for concurrence.

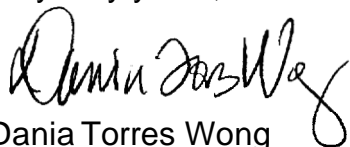
The report prepared by our department to the Civil Service Commission is also attached for your review. The recommendations that result from the report are designed to expedite the County's recruitment process. The report identified three areas in which improvements can be made — in the rules and County Code; in the Personnel Department practice in operating this process; and in the actions of the operating departments. The entire report is in front of you, but your approval is only required on the rule and County Code changes.

The report details each of six phases of the recruitment process and describes the need for rule changes and administrative changes to expedite the process. The specific recommended language changes are listed at the end of the report. **All** changes are designed to speed up the recruitment process while still protecting the fairness of the process. The major changes remove certain time frames from the Civil Service Rules and substitute the discretion of the Personnel Director.

Personnel Department staff members will be present at the Board meeting to answer specific questions about the recommended changes. To adopt the changes included in the report, it is necessary to approve the attached resolution implementing the recommended changes in the Civil Service Rules and the attached change in the County Code.

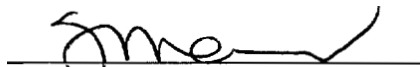
Therefore, it is RECOMMENDED that your Board adopt the attached amendment to Resolution No. 247-76 to amend the Personnel Regulations with the attached revisions to the Civil Service Commission rules, and adopt ordinance amending Section 3.20.05 of the Santa Cruz County Code regarding eligibility lists.

Very truly yours,



Dania Torres Wong  
Personnel Director

RECOMMENDED:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
SUSAN A. MAURIELLO  
County Administrative Officer

Attachment: Proposed Resolution

cc: Personnel (2); Each Department; Civil Service Commission

OF THE COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

RESOLUTION NO.

On the motion of Supervisor  
Duly seconded by Supervisor  
The following resolution is adopted:

RESOLUTION AMENDING PERSONNEL REGULATIONS

WHEREAS, the Civil Service Commission has adopted changes to the Civil Service Rules to expedite the County's recruitment process; and

WHEREAS, those changes amend the following rules: Section V, Subsections C, E, G, J, O, and R; and Section VI, B, and C.

WHEREAS, it is now desirable and necessary to amend said resolution to effect said changes; and

BE IT RESOLVED AND ORDERED that the Personnel Regulations 130 Section V and VI be amended as shown in the attachment;

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Santa Cruz, State of California, this     day of                     ,2001, by the following vote:

AYES:           Supervisors  
NOES:           Supervisors  
ABSENT:        Supervisors

\_\_\_\_\_  
TONY CAMPOS, Chairperson of said Board

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk of the Board

Approved as to form



Assistant County Counsel  
Cc: All departments, Personnel (2)

Section V, J: Term of Candidate's Eligibility. The rules prescribed and enforced by the Civil Service Commission shall provide for the creation of eligible lists upon which shall appear the names of successful applicants in the order of their standing in the examinations. Such eligible lists shall remain in effect for ~~a minimum period of six months to~~ a maximum period of two years subject to the needs of various County departments as determined by the Personnel Director.

Section V, R: Alternate Eligible Lists: If a vacancy exists in a class for which there is no eligible list, or there are ~~less than three~~ *five or less* applicants available from the eligible list, the Personnel Director may prepare an appropriate eligible list for the class from one or more existing eligible lists. For this purpose, the Personnel Director shall select eligible lists for classes for which the minimum qualifications and examinations are similar to or higher than those required for the class in which the vacancy exists.

Section VI, B, (1 a): B. Certification of Eligibles.

1. Definitions

- a. Alternate Eligible Lists. An eligible list ~~drawn from an eligible list~~ for a class with comparable or higher employment standards than the class with a vacancy, when no eligible list is available or there are ~~less than three~~ *five or less* applicants available from the list for the class in which the vacancy exists.

Section VI, B, 2, J: Alternate Employment Lists. Certification from an Alternate Employment List may be made when there are ~~less than 3~~ *five or less* applicants available from the eligible list for the class in which the vacancy exists.

- 1) Change the Civil Service Rule on appeals for qualification review to allow that appeals of qualification reviews are at the discretion of the Personnel Director.

Section V, E. Appeal from Applicants:

An applicant who is not admitted to an examination because of failure to meet the basic employment standards or additional screening criteria which may include a competitive screening of qualifications, used in determining finalists shall be notified *by either mail, telephone or an electronic mail address*. ~~to their last known address and may appeal such decision to the Personnel Director within 7 days of mailing. The Personnel Director shall respond to all appeals filed on a timely manner. The Personnel Director shall investigate the appeal, take appropriate action and notify the applicant of the final determination.~~ *Appeal of qualification review may be made at the discretion of the Personnel Director.*

Section V, C. Examination Announcements: The official examination announcement will show:

1. title and salary range for the class;
2. typical duties to be performed;
3. minimum qualification requirements as officially established and such alternative equivalent standards for education or experience as may be approved by the Personnel Director;
4. ~~relative weights assigned to the various parts of the examinations~~ *indicate which components of the examination process might be administered during the process, but allow the actual components of the examination process to be determined after the final filing date based on number of applicants and level of applicant's qualifications;*
5. other special conditions for admission to the examination, certification and employment; and
6. final date applications may be filed if established.

Section V, G. Assignment of Examination Weights. The Personnel Director shall assign weights to each part of the examination prior to its public announcement *or may allow the examination(s) to be determined after the final filing date based on number of applicants and level of applicant's qualifications.*

Section V, O: Oral Examinations: ~~An oral examination shall be given for positions which involve supervisory or administrative duties.~~ When an oral examination forms part of a total examination, the Personnel Director shall appoint an examination board, which shall consist of three or more persons, of which at least one shall be familiar with the requirements of the job or character of work in the class examined. In the event of last minute circumstances, beyond the control of the Personnel Director, an oral board of two members may render an official rating. Appointing authorities may observe oral examinations but shall not serve as raters for positions for which they are the appointing authority.

Section VI, C(6). Open Competitive, Promotional, Extra-Help Eligible Lists.

- a. Removal or withholding of names.
  - (1) The Personnel Director may remove the name of an eligible person from an eligible list for any of the reasons stipulated in Civil Service Rules Section IV B.
  - (2) The Personnel Director may remove a name from the eligible list on evidence that the eligible *person* cannot be located by postal authorities.
  - (3) ~~The Personnel Director may withhold the name of an eligible from certification to a department in which the appointing authority passes over the eligible's name in connection with three separate appointments, if the appointing authority submits valid reasons for withholding certification.~~

**(3)** *The name of an eligible person that waives an interview three or more times during the life of the eligible list for the same classification. Such person's name may be restored to the list upon written request by the person and approved by the Personnel Director.*

Section VI, B (3):

g. Open Competitive, and Promotional and Extra-Help Eligible Lists.

- 1) Certification from open competitive and promotional eligible lists is on a "rule of ten" basis -- ten names for one vacant position in exam score order. If there is more than one vacancy, an additional name is certified for each additional vacancy. The names of all eligibles with the same (tied) score will be certified together. (While the Personnel Director may refer an entire eligible list, only those certified may be considered by the appointing authority for one vacancy.)
- 2) *For hard-to-recruit-for positions, as defined by the Personnel Director, the Personnel Director may certify an entire eligible list and the department may contact as many candidates as necessary, in examination score order, provided that all candidates above those selected have been interviewed. The names of all eligibles with the same tied score will be certified together.*

ORDINANCE NO. \_\_\_\_\_

**ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 3.20.050 OF THE SANTA CRUZ COUNTY CODE REGARDING ELIGIBILITY LISTS**

The Board of Supervisors of the County of Santa Cruz ordains as follows:

**SECTION I**

Section 3.20.050 of the Santa Cruz County Code is hereby amended to read as follows:

**3.20.050 Eligible lists.**

The rules prescribed and enforced by the civil service commission shall provide for the creation of eligible lists upon which shall appear the names of successful applicants in the order of their standing in the examinations. Such eligible lists shall remain in effect for ~~a minimum period of six months to~~ a maximum period of two years subject to the needs of the various county departments as determined by the personnel director. (Prior code § 4.05.470: Ord. 455-A, 12/7/54; Ord. 1843, 3/27/73)

**SECTION II**

This ordinance shall take effect on the 31<sup>st</sup> day after the date of final passage.


PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Santa Cruz, State of California, this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2001, by the following vote:

**AYES:** SUPERVISORS  
**NOES:** SUPERVISORS  
**ABSENT:** SUPERVISORS  
**ABSTAIN:** SUPERVISORS

\_\_\_\_\_  
TONY CAMPOS, Chairman  
Board of Supervisors

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk of said Board

Approved as to form:

 11-9-01  
\_\_\_\_\_  
County Counsel

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**SECTION I**

Section 3.20.050 of the Santa Cruz County Code is hereby amended to read as follows:

**3.20.050 Eligible lists.**

The rules prescribed and enforced by the civil service commission shall provide for the creation of eligible lists upon which shall appear the names of successful applicants in the order of their standing in the examinations. Such eligible lists shall remain in effect for a maximum period of two years subject to **the** needs of the various county departments as determined by the personnel director. (Prior code § 4.05.470: Ord. 455-A, 12/7/54; Ord. 1843, 3/27/73)

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PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Santa **Cruz**, State of California, this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2001, by the following vote:

AYES: SUPERVISORS  
NOES: SUPERVISORS  
ABSENT: SUPERVISORS  
ABSTAIN: SUPERVISORS

\_\_\_\_\_  
TONY CAMPOS, Chairman  
Board of Supemsors

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk of said Board

Approved as to form:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
County Counsel



## **Report to the Civil Service Commission/Streamlining the Recruitment Process**

During Final Budget hearings, the Board of Supervisors asked that the Personnel Department propose civil service rule changes that would allow for recruitments to be conducted more expeditiously. The Department was directed to recommend rule changes to the Civil Service Commission at its October quarterly meeting, and forward any approved changes for consideration by the Board thereafter.

This report divides the recruitment process into six phases, and details the steps in each phase – and how those steps might be expedited – either through rule changes, Personnel or operating department action, or improvements gained through the new on-line application system. A summary of recommended rule changes is contained at the end of the report.

### Phase One – Pre-Recruitment Activities

This phase involves a vacancy being created in a County position and the notification of the Personnel Department that the vacancy exists and must be filled. There are generally four different reasons that a vacancy will be created – a resignation, retirement, promotion, or the creation of a new, vacant position. Each of these requires a slightly different response by the operating department or the Personnel Department.

If a new position is created during budget hearings in late June, it must be classified by the Personnel Department and then filled. The department's goal is to have all newly-created positions classified within thirty days of being allocated by the Board of Supervisors. Then the process begins to fill the position.

In the event of the other reasons a vacancy is created, the department will let the personnel department know that a position must be filled by either memo, phone call, or request for a certification list. If no list exists the Personnel Department will move to initiate a recruitment.

Once a recruitment is initiated, the Personnel Department will review the previous recruitment, and make an appointment to meet with the operating department about their desires for the recruitment and in filling the position. Once the operating department provides information on the length of the filing period, type of outreach, changes to the position since the last recruitment and other goals of the recruitment – then the job bulletin is sent to print and the recruitment is scheduled to open.

There are a number of problems that exist in this first phase:

- 1) Operating departments are required to use an existing eligibility list before a recruitment can be initiated. That list may be no longer usable after the initial uses by other departments – because there are no remaining names of people willing to interview and available for work – but the Civil Service rules (and County Code) require that lists must be valid for at least **six** months. This leads to

situations where the departments must go through the names on an existing list to determine that the list is not valid. If six months have not passed since the list was established, the Personnel Department must conduct a recruitment and mix the new names with the existing names on the list – as the original names on the list must remain at least six months in accordance with the rules. A revision that removes the minimum time for eligibility lists to remain in use (the maximum is now two years) at the discretion of the Personnel Director would streamline the process once a department knows a vacancy exists – and removes this step when it is an impediment to beginning a new recruitment right away.

- 2) Departments either do not notify the Personnel Department of a vacancy immediately upon finding out about such a vacancy – or do not meet in a timely fashion with the Personnel Department at the beginning of the recruitment. The Personnel Department proposes conducting a training on how operating departments can be helpful in expediting recruitments – and including a section on how quickly to notify the Personnel Department when a vacancy occurs, and requiring a meeting within days of notification of beginning a recruitment.
- 3) The Personnel Department is now conducting a large number of recruitments. A method of expediting the filling of positions is using existing lists or resources to lower the number of recruitments. This has been done already by using “alternate lists” to fill positions when vacancies occur. Alternate lists can be used when there are three or less active candidates left on an eligibility list – or when a list is not available for a specific vacant position.

We propose to continue to do that whenever possible to eliminate the need for new recruitments. This process is allowed by Civil Service Rules, but how it is actually done has long been determined by policies established by the Personnel Department. Existing Personnel Department policies set forth requirements related to job groupings, salary, and knowledge and abilities. The current process for determining alternate lists is quite cumbersome. We propose a change in the practice that will give discretion to the Personnel Director to determine what are appropriate alternate lists based on the general premises of salary (equal or higher); and the knowledge, skills, and abilities of the candidates on the alternate list.

- 4) As indicated above, alternate lists can be used when there are three or less active candidates left on an eligibility list. Our department staff members have found that frequently when there are a few more than three persons remaining on a list – that number gets down to three or less once the candidates are offered an interview. This takes time, and then an alternate list is requested after those interview offers are made. If this rule was changed so that an alternate list can be used when five persons or less are on an eligibility list, the process will be expedited. Therefore, we further propose a change to Civil Service Rules which would allow an alternate list to be used for filling a position when there **are** five or less candidates on an existing list for the vacant position.

5) A large number of recruitments are required by vacancies in a third level of a position where the first two levels are alternately staffed. Making the third level part of an alternately staffed series would eliminate the need for new recruitments. For example, in the Personnel Analyst series, Assistant, Associate, and Senior Personnel Analyst positions are alternately staffed. That means that an employee may be hired at the Assistant level, and promoted to the next two levels if the performance is satisfactory and minimum qualifications are met for the higher job at the time of promotion. If only Assistant and Associate are alternately staffed – then a separate new recruitment must be held by the Personnel Department for the Senior position. Alternately staffing an increased number of positions will reduce the number of recruitments conducted by the department – and allow operating departments to move directly to filling positions at a lower level.

6) Presently all recruitments are opened on a Monday, and the job bulletins and weekly job mailer go to the printer the Wednesday before. If the request for recruitment is received at a time it cannot be included on the bulletin when it goes to print – then the recruitment must bump to the next week, even if the information is received first thing the Thursday after the items go to print on Wednesday. There is a discipline on recruitments by the common opening of a recruitment on Monday, and getting too far away from this discipline would not be workable. However, there are a number of recruitments that are one-week in duration, generally promotional-only. These recruitments could easily be opened on any day of the week. Moving to a flexible opening day for these recruitments only would trim time from the recruitment process for positions in this category.

#### Phase One Recommendations:

- 1) Civil Service Rules and County Code – allow for the minimum length of eligibility lists to be at the discretion of the Personnel Director.
- 2) Operating Departments – training to notify the Personnel Department immediately upon a vacancy occurring and a required meeting within days of the notification.
- 3) Civil Service Rule – allow for an alternate list to be used for filling a vacant position when there are five or less candidates on the existing list for that position.
- 4) Personnel Department/County Administrative Officer – consider the addition to alternately staffed series to lower the number of recruitments.
- 5) Personnel Department – move to a flexible opening day for recruitments with a one-week filing period.
- 6) Personnel Department – change the practice on determining alternate lists to give discretion to the Personnel Director to determine what are appropriate alternate lists based on the general premises of salary (equal or higher); and knowledge, skills, and abilities.

#### Phase Two – Outreach

This phase involves the outreach activities undertaken for each recruitment just before and during the filing period. Outreach now falls into six major categories: 1) Workshops held by colleges, secondary schools, and career centers attended by County Personnel staff members; 2) Job Fairs conducted by interest groups; 3) Farmers Market, primarily the one in Watsonville; 4) Work with departments for outreach in specialized categories such as with other agencies, special publications, or other targeted outreach, 5) Direct contacts with people as a follow-up to one of these other items, and 6) advertising, mailing, and internet outreach conducted by recruitment analysts.

At final budget hearings, an additional position was granted to the Personnel Department for recruitment outreach. This new position will address the Board's concern about "hard-to-recruit for" positions by doing an analysis of these positions, where we are experiencing the difficulties in attracting new employees to these positions, and doing follow-up work with the departments in outreach. The new position will be used only for "hard-to-recruit for" positions and will strengthen our department's recruitment activities in this regard.

The Employment Services Division will still work with events, targeted outreach, and follow-up with individuals. The three items remaining – advertising, mailing, and internet outreach – are summarized as follows. Currently, generic advertising is done in local newspapers outlining vacant positions. Specialized advertising is worked out with the departments in which the specific specialized positions are located, and the costs are generally shared between the Personnel budget and the department budget.

Weekly mailings are done with the announcement of jobs that are open for applications. In one week a larger list of 260 is used, and in the alternating week a list of 110 is used. These lists include other governments, job placement offices, various community organizations, and any other potential source of applicants. Specialized mailings are done on some recruitments in coordination with operating departments, and are usually sent to colleges, professional associations, and other government agencies – all related to the employment area for which the recruitment is being conducted. For specialized recruitments for "hard-to-recruit-for" positions, over the past few years the number of mailers sent out for each recruitment averages one thousand – a considerable clerical task for the recruitment division.

Internet outreach is done a number of ways. The County's web page contains the weekly list of open recruitments, as well as a job bulletin for each, and a job application which can be downloaded and used. The new on-line system, expected to be operational in November and fully utilized in the first quarter of next year, will encourage this method of applying for a job. Additionally, the department posts jobs on a number of general and specialized employment web sites – including Yahoo, Ihirelawenforcement.com, jobs in government, and many other related web locations. Sometimes it takes these web pages twenty-four to forty-eight hours to post a job announcement sent by the Personnel Department. On-line recruitment duties will be assigned to a new position created at final budget hearings, also allocating more time to existing staff to conduct recruitments.

Improvements in the outreach portion of this phase can be made in interactions with the operating departments. Outreach activities only work in a three-week recruitment period if launched in the first few days after the recruitment opens. Departments are so anxious to open recruitments, that they are sometimes opened without adequate consultation on the outreach and advertising – making it likely that the recruitment will be extended after the outreach has all been done with the announcement of the three week closing date.

It is our proposal that this issue be added to the training for departments on recruitments – with the understanding that departments must be able to make certain outreach decisions in time for the opening of a recruitment, and that on occasion it is even more efficient to wait the week to open so that all the advertising can be placed. This might not sound like a proposal that shortens the time of the recruitment process, but in fact it will – as many times the recruitments are extended because the outreach did not reach potential candidates in time for them to submit applications by the original final filing date.

Phase Two Recommendation:

- 7) Operating Departments – training to understand the tradeoff between opening a recruitment as quickly as possible and the effectiveness of the mailing and advertising outreach for the recruitment.

Phase Three – Filing Period

This phase involves the activities taken during the time a recruitment is open for the filing of applications. Existing rules require at least a seven-day filing period, but set no maximum. The average filing period for non-continuous recruitments is three weeks. A decade ago, this would have been two weeks, but the lag time for advertising and mail outreach to be effective had increased the average time open for filings. Five to six week filing periods are the standard in “hard-to-recruit for” positions.

A majority of recruitments in the past year have been continuous, which means that the recruitment is open on a continuing basis, but can be closed on any given Friday. Applications on file at that point will automatically be referred to the screening and testing process, and the recruitment will still remain open. A change in practice to allow for continuous recruitments to be closed on any day will allow a faster processing of applications from these recruitments, shaving a few more days off the time required.

In addition, the date in which an application can be received for a fixed filing period offers a chance for improvement. Presently, the practice is that any application received or postmarked by midnight on the final filing date, always a Friday, will be included in the screening and testing process. This means that applications can still trickle in the Tuesday and even Wednesday after filing closes the previous Friday. We propose a change in the practice so that applications must be **received** by Friday at 5 p.m. to be included. In the era of e-mail and faxes, this is less of a problem that in the time in which this practice was originally created, and changing this practice will reduce the recruitment

time by a few days. If this recommendation is approved, we will alter the job bulletins to emphasize this change.

Phase Three Recommendations:

- 8) Personnel Department – allow for applications to be forwarded from continuous recruitments at the end of any given day.
- 9) Personnel Department – change the practice on the final filing date so that applications must be **received** in the Personnel Department by the close of the filing period.

Phase Four – Screening (Qualification Review) of Applications

This phase immediately follows the close of filing for applications, and is the review of those applications against the minimum qualifications for the position. Current rules allow for a qualification review (or “screening”) of each application submitted. Those applicants not meeting the minimum qualifications for the position for which they are applying are notified by U.S. Mail that they have been “screened out” of the process – and the rules give these applicants seven days to appeal this determination. This is a significant time block in the middle of the recruitment – and requires a seven-day lag time in moving to the examination portion of the recruitment.

We believe that this rule can be changed to a provision that states “appeals of qualification reviews are at the discretion of the Personnel Director”. We believe that a candidate can quickly provide additional information if it would change the outcome of a screening, and that this provision would allow for that. Now, there is a seven-day period in which this is allowed, and candidates routinely wait until the seventh day to file any additional information. Additionally, if it is a “hard-to-recruit-for” position, and there are only a few applications – this would give the Personnel Director more discretion to insure that every eligible candidate is given the opportunity to meet the minimum qualification, while not creating a rule that would require it in instances where there are one hundred applicants.

Phase Four Recommendation:

- 10) Civil Service Rules – change the Civil Service Rule on appeals for qualification review to allow that appeals of qualification reviews are at the discretion of the Personnel Director.

Phase Five – The Examination Process

This phase is the heart of the recruitment process, and can be the most time-consuming part of the process if involving a detailed examination. The best-known and most widely used portion of the exam process is the oral exam, but this phase can also include a performance or written exam. The different portions of the exams are weighted, and the scores are combined at the end of the process to provide an overall ranking.

In lieu of any of these exams, an applicant may also be admitted to a list by a review of a candidate's training and experience (also known as a "T and E" process). In those instances, the paper screening of training and experience is used to admit candidates directly to a list – and a good screening tool is needed, as well as the participation of the operating department in this process.

This is done in a limited number of situations. Usually, a job like a Computer Operations Technician – where knowledge can be clearly known from four or five technical supplemental application questions – are the type of positions where this process is used. This process does not work at all with entry-level positions – which sometimes have the highest volume of applications in our recruitments – because usually candidates do not have enough experience or training to be rated from paper.

The supplemental application plays an importance role in this process. When a supplemental application (additional questions about the experience related to the specific position available) is used, the review of qualifications (or screening) is relatively easy. Therefore, for a T & E process – or for screening of applications – supplemental applications are a very useful tool. However, they are added work and do discourage some candidates from applying, particularly if there are four or five essay responses required. There are times that operating departments add supplemental questions because they are desirous of getting more information – but the supplemental questions do not necessarily assist the recruitment process. We recommend adding the subject of when to use supplemental applications to the training process for operating departments.

A list can also be established without an examination if there are ten or less candidates (qualifying appraisal – or "Q. A.") that meet the minimum qualifications during the screening process. The list will show all candidates tied at the same score, and all candidates are referred to a department for an interview – with departments having to interview all candidates before making a job offer.

Additionally, there is an expedited process that is used for Sheriff's Department applicants that will be described at the end of this section – to be able to explain how to move this process rapidly with dedicated staff resources.

The oral examination process generally consists of a common set of questions, relating to the job duties of the position, asked by an oral board of three persons. Those three persons generally represent a County department where the position exists, someone from another government agency, and a third person from the community or another County department. The oral board rates the candidates following the set of oral examinations.

In planning for a recruitment, the Personnel Department works with a tentative time for an oral examination from the beginning of the process – but the date is only finally scheduled following the screening of applications. The precise date of an oral board is scheduled only when at least two of three oral board members are confirmed for participation.

A written examination is a common set of written questions given to all candidates for a position at one time. It is generally related to job duties, and can be scored by using answer sheets that can easily be scanned in the department's "Scantron" utility. With small numbers of applicants, the written test is usually administered the same day as the oral exam. With a large number of candidates, the written test is usually administered in advance, so that only those who pass will be invited to the oral exam portion of the process.

Performance examinations can also be administered as part of the process. For Sheriff's Department deputy positions, an agility test is the performance exam. In the days of typewriters, typing tests were a performance exam. For certain positions, a performance exam might be writing a report related to the position – or include a general writing exam to rate the candidate's writing ability. For certain positions, an "in-basket" exercise might be given – where candidates are required to review and prioritize for action different administrative items in an in-basket.

There are a number of issues raised by the rules and practices in the examination phase that could expedite the overall recruitment process:

- 1) One problem in this process is the Civil Service Rule on the noticing of the recruitments. If a job bulletin states that an oral examination will be held – it must be held regardless of the situation once the time is reached for the examination. The Personnel Department believes that being flexible in these situations could expedite the recruitment given the circumstances at the time of testing. We propose to use standard language on job bulletins allowing flexibility, such as "a test may contain any of the following components: training and experience, written, oral, or performance."
- 2) The Personnel Department now receives advice from operating departments on oral board panel members, but does not utilize the operating departments in actually making calls to their counterparts in other agencies asking them to serve on County oral boards. A significant problem in the examination process can be the time taken by recruitment of oral board members, since subject matter experts are valuable members of the team. If operating department staff members make these calls to other agencies instead of Personnel Department staff members, then personal relationships can be utilized and other agencies will have someone to call in return when they have oral boards. This practice is more likely to produce oral board members and move the testing process along. We propose making this change in our practice. We also propose adding this to the training of operational departments – so they know they are building chits for our County by accepting oral board duty with other agencies.
- 3) Current Personnel Department practice requires a seven-day notice to applicants of each examination. If there are a small number of candidates, and all are notified by telephone of the test date and accept a test slot – the waiting period



must still be observed. In these situations, this is an obstacle to timely action. We propose a change in practice that allows for a waiving of this time period if all candidates have been contacted successfully.

- 4) The Civil Service rules currently require an oral examination for a position that contains administrative or supervisory duties. If this position is a hard-to-recruit-for position, and there might be ten or less candidates for this position, then an oral examination is required – and a Qualifying Appraisal (Q.A. – see below) cannot be done. In order to expedite the examination process, we propose that the requirement for an oral examination in these instances be dropped.
- 5) When the Qualifying Appraisal (Q.A.) is done to admit ten or less candidates directly to the list after screening – operating departments sometimes are desirous of administering some form of test to the candidates when the list is forwarded to the department for hire, a practice that is not allowed by the rules. If there is to be any testing tool used, it would be easier to continue the testing process while the recruitment is still in the Personnel Department. We recommend that this issue be added to the training with operating departments – so they can best assist in the decision of whether to administer a test to a small number of candidates or proceed to a Q.A. to admit the candidates directly to the list and then be done with the testing process.
- 6) Certain written tests are done on a frequent level. High volume tests such as for clerical positions are in this category, as are hard-to-fill positions. For example, for the hard-to-fill position of Probation Officer, written tests are now given the first and third Thursday of each month for anywhere from one to five candidates at a time. These tests are usually administered in the evening and take three hours of staff time to proctor. This is a time-consuming task with a limited staff. The County Administrative Officer has approved using salary savings for a pilot project in 2001-02 to hire extra-help proctors to administer these tests and provide more staff time for other recruiting tasks. We believe this will assist in providing more staff time for other recruitments.

The Recruitment Process for Sheriff's Deputy and Correctional Officer positions. The Personnel Department began an expedited process for these Sheriff's positions last year, which has led to filling these positions faster than before. This has been accomplished by the following: Recruitments for these positions are open all the time on a continuous basis. Applications are forwarded to the next recruitment step on a daily basis. If applications are received in person, the applications are "screened" on the spot, and the candidates are informed about drop-in testing. If the applications are received other than in person (by US. mail, for example), then a letter is written to the candidate once the immediate screening is done informing them of drop-in testing. Testing is done daily on a drop-in basis. If candidates fail to drop in, a follow-up letter is sent. The Sheriff's Department does agility performance tests on a monthly basis, and all names from the testing process are forwarded to the Sheriff's Department on a regular basis prior to the scheduled agility tests. Following successful completion of these two testing phases,

candidates are admitted to the list and the Sheriff's Department begins a background check.

This new process has expedited Sheriff's recruitments. It requires a large amount of staff time to make sure that the responses are done immediately, drop-in testing is available each day, and each candidate is monitored until the testing process happens and is completed. The additional staff time has paid off in this process.

Phase Five Recommendations:

- 11) Operating Departments – Training on the appropriate instances to require supplemental application questions.
- 12) Civil Service Rules – Change the Civil Service Rules so that job bulletins are flexible with what the components of a test will be during the examination process.
- 13) Operating Departments – Training so that County staff members sit on oral boards of other agencies as incentives for getting staff members of those other agencies to sit on County oral boards.
- 14) Civil Service Rules – Change the Civil Service Rules to eliminate the requirement for an oral examination for positions with supervisory or administrative duties.
- 15) Personnel Department – Change the departmental practice requiring seven days notice of examination to allow for less when all candidates have been contacted.
- 16) Operating Departments – Training on the tradeoffs for admitting candidates to a list through the Q. A. process and administering a test during the recruitment process.

Phase Six – Recruitment Close-Out and List Certification

This phase involves the closing out of a recruitment and list certification to the operating department. The closing of the recruitment involves converting raw scores to final scores and establishing a ranking for the certification list.

The certification of lists actually involves sending all the available candidates – the top ten for each vacant position plus anyone on the transfer or reinstatement lists – to the operating department requesting it. The Personnel Department has an average of a three-day turnaround on requests received from departments on certification lists. However, there are constant complaints from departments that it takes longer. This is, in part, due to the fact that supervisors know when they requested a list, but it takes time to move through a department before the request moves to the Personnel Department.

There are two issues involved with certification that are worthy of improvement. First, there is no existing rule that allows the removal of a name from a list after three waives of interviewing. Right now, a candidate may have unlimited right to waive an interview, and a department always get their name on the list. This is a waste of the department's

time in moving down the list, and clogs the list with candidates that really are not interested in an interview or new position. We would propose this rule, with a caveat that the candidate may submit a letter to the Personnel Director providing a good reason as to why they should not be removed after three waives, and it shall be at the discretion of the Personnel Director whether to remove the name.

The second issue concerns the number of names provided to the department upon request of a list. Right now, as previously stated the top ten candidates are provided to the department for interview when there is one vacancy, and an additional name for each additional vacancy – that is, if there are two vacancies, eleven names are provided from the list. If people waive the right to an interview, or take themselves off the list, the operating department must request additional names from the Personnel Department. For “hard-to-fill” positions, this adds a roadblock to expediting the process. We propose a rule change that allows for ALL names to be provided to the department when requested, even though the current modified rule of ten still applies, when the position is difficult to fill. If there is need for additional names, the names are already provided and it will not be an additional task between the Personnel Department and the operating department. If this recommendation is adopted, the Personnel Director will establish a list of positions that are difficult to fill.

The on-line application system has a second phase that will allow for the move to electronic certification of lists. This will reduce time in this process, as right now interoffice mail is the method of list transmission, and is expected to be up and running by the Fall of 2002. Moving to this is dependent on an upgrade to the TRAC (applicant tracking) system that will allow for this function.

Phase Six Recommendations:

- 17) Civil Service Rules – Add a rule which provides that a candidate may be removed from an eligibility list after a waive of three interviews.
- 18) Civil Service Rules – Allow an operating department to request all names on the eligible list, even though the modified rule of ten will still apply, for difficult to fill positions.



Recommended Changes – Civil Service Rules (and County Code for #1)

- 1) Rules **and** County Code – allow for the minimum length of eligibility lists to be at the discretion of the Personnel Director.

County Code: 3.20.050 **Eligible Lists**

The rules prescribed and enforced by the civil service commission shall provide for the creation of eligible lists upon which shall appear the names of successful applicants in the order of their standing in the examinations, Such eligible lists shall remain in effect for ~~a minimum period of six months to~~ a maximum period of two years subject to the needs of various county departments as determined by the personnel director.

Civil Service Rules: Section V, J: Term of Candidate's Eligibility. The rules prescribed and enforced by the Civil Service Commission shall provide for the creation of eligible lists upon which shall appear the names of successful applicants in the order of their standing in the examinations. Such eligible lists shall remain in effect for ~~a minimum period of six months to~~ a maximum period of two years subject to the needs of various County departments as determined by the Personnel Director.

- 2) Allow for an alternate list to be used for filling a vacant position when there are five or less candidates on the existing list for that position.

Section V, R: Alternate Eligible Lists: If a vacancy exists in a class for which there is no eligible list, or there are ~~less than three~~ *five or less* applicants available from the eligible list, the Personnel Director may prepare an appropriate eligible list for the class from one or more existing eligible lists. For this purpose, the Personnel Director shall select eligible lists for classes for which the minimum qualifications and examinations are similar to or higher than those required for the class in which the vacancy exists.

Section VI, B, (1 a): B. Certification of Eligibles.

1. Definitions

- a. Alternate Eligible Lists. An eligible list ~~drawn from an eligible list~~ for a class with comparable or higher employment standards than the class with a vacancy, when no eligible list is available or there are ~~less than three~~ *five or less* applicants available from the list for the class in which the vacancy exists.

Section VI, B, 2, J: Alternate Employment Lists. Certification from an Alternate Employment List may be made when there are ~~less than 3~~ *five or less* applicants available from the eligible list for the class in which the vacancy exists.

- 3) Change the Civil Service Rule on appeals for qualification review to allow that appeals of qualification reviews are at the discretion of the Personnel Director.

Section V, E. Appeal from Applicants:

An applicant who is not admitted to an examination because of failure to meet the basic employment standards or additional screening criteria which may include a competitive screening of qualifications, used in determining finalists shall be notified *by either mail, telephone or an electronic mail address.* ~~to their last known address and may appeal such decision to the Personnel Director within 7 days of mailing. The Personnel Director shall respond to all appeals filed on a timely manner. The Personnel Director shall investigate the appeal, take appropriate action and notify the applicant of the final determination.~~ *Appeal of qualification review may be made at the discretion of the Personnel Director.*

- 4) Civil Service Rules – Change the Civil Service Rules so that job bulletins are flexible with what the components of a test will be during the examination process.

Section V, C. Examination Announcements: The official examination announcement will show:

- i. title and salary range for the class;
2. typical duties to be performed;
3. minimum qualification requirements as officially established and such alternative equivalent standards for education or experience as may be approved by the Personnel Director;
4. ~~relative weights assigned to the various parts of the examinations indicate which components of the examination process might be administered during the process of, but allow the actual components of the examination process to be determined after the final filing date based on number of applicants and level of applicant's qualifications;~~
5. other special conditions for admission to the examination, certification and employment; and
6. final date applications may be filed if established.

Section V, G. Assignment of Examination Weights. The Personnel Director shall assign weights to each **part** of the examination prior to its public announcement *or may allow the examination(s) to be determined after the final filing date based on number of applicants and level of applicant's qualifications.*

- 5) Change the Civil Service Rules to eliminate the requirement for an oral examination for positions with supervisory or administrative duties.

Section V, O: Oral Examinations: ~~An oral examination shall be given for positions which involve supervisory or administrative duties.~~ When an oral

examination forms part of a total examination, the Personnel Director shall appoint an examination board, which shall consist of three or more persons, of which at least one shall be familiar with the requirements of the job or character of work in the class examined. In the event of last minute circumstances, beyond the control of the Personnel Director, an oral board of two members may render an official rating. Appointing authorities may observe oral examinations but shall not serve as raters for positions for which they are the appointing authority.

- 6) Add a rule which provides that a candidate may be removed from an eligibility list after a waive of three interviews.

Section VI, C(6). Open Competitive, Promotional, Extra-Help Eligible Lists.

a. Removal or withholding of names.

- (1) The Personnel Director may remove the name of an eligible person from an eligible list for any of the reasons stipulated in Civil Service Rules Section IV B.
- (2) The Personnel Director may remove a name from the eligible list on evidence that the eligible *person* cannot be located by postal authorities.
- ~~(3) The Personnel Director may withhold the name of an eligible from certification to a department in which the appointing authority passes over the eligible's name in connection with three separate appointments, if the appointing authority submits valid reasons for withholding certification.~~

*(3) The name of an eligible person that waives an interview three or more times during the life of the eligible list for the same classification. Such person's name may be restored to the list upon written request by the person and approved by the Personnel Director.*

- 7) Allow an operating department to request all names on the eligible list, even though the modified rule of ten will still apply, for difficult to fill positions.

Section VI, B (3):

g. Open Competitive, and Promotional and Extra-Help Eligible Lists.

- 1) **Certification from open competitive and promotional eligible lists is on a "rule of ten" basis -- ten names for one vacant position in exam score order. If there is more than one vacancy, an additional name is certified for each additional vacancy. The names of all eligibles with the same (tied) score will be certified together. (While the Personnel Director may refer an entire eligible list, only those certified may be considered by the appointing authority for one vacancy.)**

2) **For** hard-to-recruit-for positions, as defined by the Personnel Director, the Personnel Director may certify an entire eligible list and the department may contact as many candidates **as** necessary, in examination score order, provided that all candidates above those selected have been interviewed. The names **of** all eligibles with the same tied score will be certified together.