

Oregon State Governments Veterans' Preference Guide

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CHIEF HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE



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INTRODUCTION

Veterans' preference in the hiring process recognizes the economic loss suffered by citizens who have served their country in uniform, restores veterans to a favorable competitive position for government employment, and acknowledges the larger obligation owed to disabled veterans.

Oregon state government complies with the veterans' preference law in the hiring and promoting of veterans and disabled veterans.

A consistent hiring process reduces confusion and frustration for the hiring manager, the recruiter and the veteran applicant. This guide covers what is required when applying veterans' preference in the employment selection process.

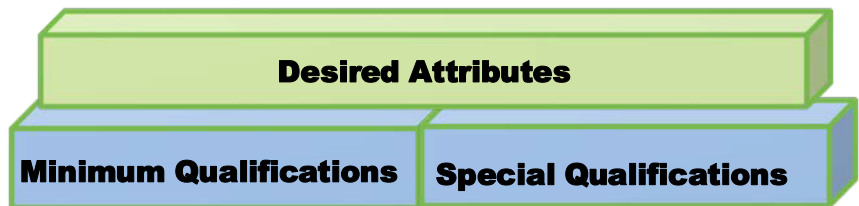


JOB REQUIREMENTS

There are several terms used to describe job requirements.

Minimum qualifications or MQs, are the baseline qualifications an applicant must meet to be eligible for a position. MQs are classification specific. These typically cannot be changed or modified.

Special Qualifications are also a baseline qualification; although not common and are specific to the job. Special qualifications are licenses, legal requirements, or bilingual qualifications.



An applicant must meet the MQs and the special qualifications to qualify for the job.

Desired Attributes or requested skills and attributes are additional qualifications that are specific to the job. There may also be a preference statement used to identify a skill or attribute highly desired for the position. These are determined by the hiring manager when analyzing the job and team needs.

Identifying the desired attributes of the job takes careful planning before the job is even posted.

The desired attributes determine which applicants move forward to an interview and are ultimately selected for the job.

DEFINING THE DESIRED ATTRIBUTES

Before posting a job for recruitment, it is important the recruiter and hiring manager meet and discuss the needs of the position and the team, identify desired attributes critical for success in the job, and create a strategy for finding qualified candidates.

By developing a clear understanding of the critical attributes needed for a person to be successful in the position, it will be easier to write a job posting, and conduct screening throughout the selection process.

The more specific the critical attributes are, the better. When job seekers can easily identify what is needed for the position and can quickly identify if the job is right for them, they know if it is worth taking the time to apply. Most job seekers who don't believe they have the qualifications, will not apply. This leads to less frustration for the recruiter and hiring manager because the quality of applicants is greatly increased and the number of applicants that do not qualify is less. This also results in less frustration for applicants.

Limiting critical skills to five or six is about the right amount for the hiring manager to screen to and for jobseekers to know if it is worth their time to apply.



WHAT DO JOB REQUIREMENTS HAVE TO DO WITH VETERANS' PREFERENCE?

Veterans' preference is only awarded when the veteran meets MQs and special qualifications.

Only the qualifications, skills, and attributes as listed in the job posting, may be used for screening a veterans' preference applicant when determining who to interview.

A veterans' preference candidate has the right to ask for an explanation for not being selected and this includes not getting an interview.





QUALIFYING FOR VETERANS' PREFERENCE

To qualify for preference, the veteran applicant must:

- Submit all required applicant materials and appropriate military documents; and
- Meet the minimum qualifications (MQs) and special qualifications of the position

A qualified veteran receives a 5-percentage points, and a qualified disabled veteran receives a 10-percentage points.

The recruiter is responsible for determining if the veteran is qualified for veterans' preference and will indicate the appropriate veteran preference on the referred list that the manager receives.

Hiring managers should only provide veterans' preference to applicants that the recruiter has identified qualify for veterans' preference.

If an applicant qualifies for veterans' preference, either the 5 or 10 percentage points will show on the referred list. If an applicant is not showing 5 or 10 percentage points on the referred list, but shows military service in the application, the applicant is not eligible for veterans' preference.

Name	Exam Score	5pt Vet	10pt DVet	Total Score
Able, Ayna J	100			100
Borey, Bea Anne	100			100
Cella, Cotton M	100			100
Deere, Delly	90		10	100
Ealke, Earl J	80			80
Goodell, Gabel C	80			80
Fox, Fanielle S	75			75
Hayes, Harold	60			60
Johnson, Jeff	55	5		60
Kemper, Kylie	40	5		45
Livewell, Lewis	20			20

Most likely the required military documents to verify veterans' preference were not submitted.



QUALIFYING FOR AN INTERVIEW

When determining who to interview, the hiring manager should first review applicants that meet MQs and special qualifications and apply the predetermined evaluation criteria (desired attributes) to identify who to forward to the interview.

Next the hiring manager should review all remaining veterans' preference applicants that have not be forwarded to the interview and also forward any veterans' preference applicants who meet all desired attributes listed in the job posting.

Veterans' preference candidates qualify for an interview when they meet all the minimum qualifications, special qualifications, and all desired attributes as listed in the job posting. The veterans' preference candidate who meet all of these criteria, must be interviewed regardless of the veteran's score or rank compared to other applicants.

When a veterans' preference candidate is not forwarded to an interview, the reason must be clearly documented.

Qualifying for Interview

$$\begin{array}{ccccccc} \text{Minimum} & & & & \text{Special} & & \text{All Required \& Requested Skills \& Attributes} \\ \text{Qualifications} & + & & & \text{Qualifications} & + & \\ & & & & & & = \text{Interview} \end{array}$$

INTERVIEW SELECTION CRITERIA

When screening a veteran applicant for job requirements, the following must be considered:

- Education
- Work experience
- Relevant life experience, i.e., experience where skills and attributes are obtained through unpaid activities such as volunteering or participating in an association or committee
- Transferable skills that are obtained through education and experience, including military education and experience.

The veteran must provide sufficient evidence in the requested application materials for the recruiter and hiring manager to determine if the veteran possess the qualifications, skills and attributes for the position. Requested application materials may include an application form, resume, cover letter, supplemental questions or work product sample. Sufficient evidence is determined by the recruiter and hiring manager.

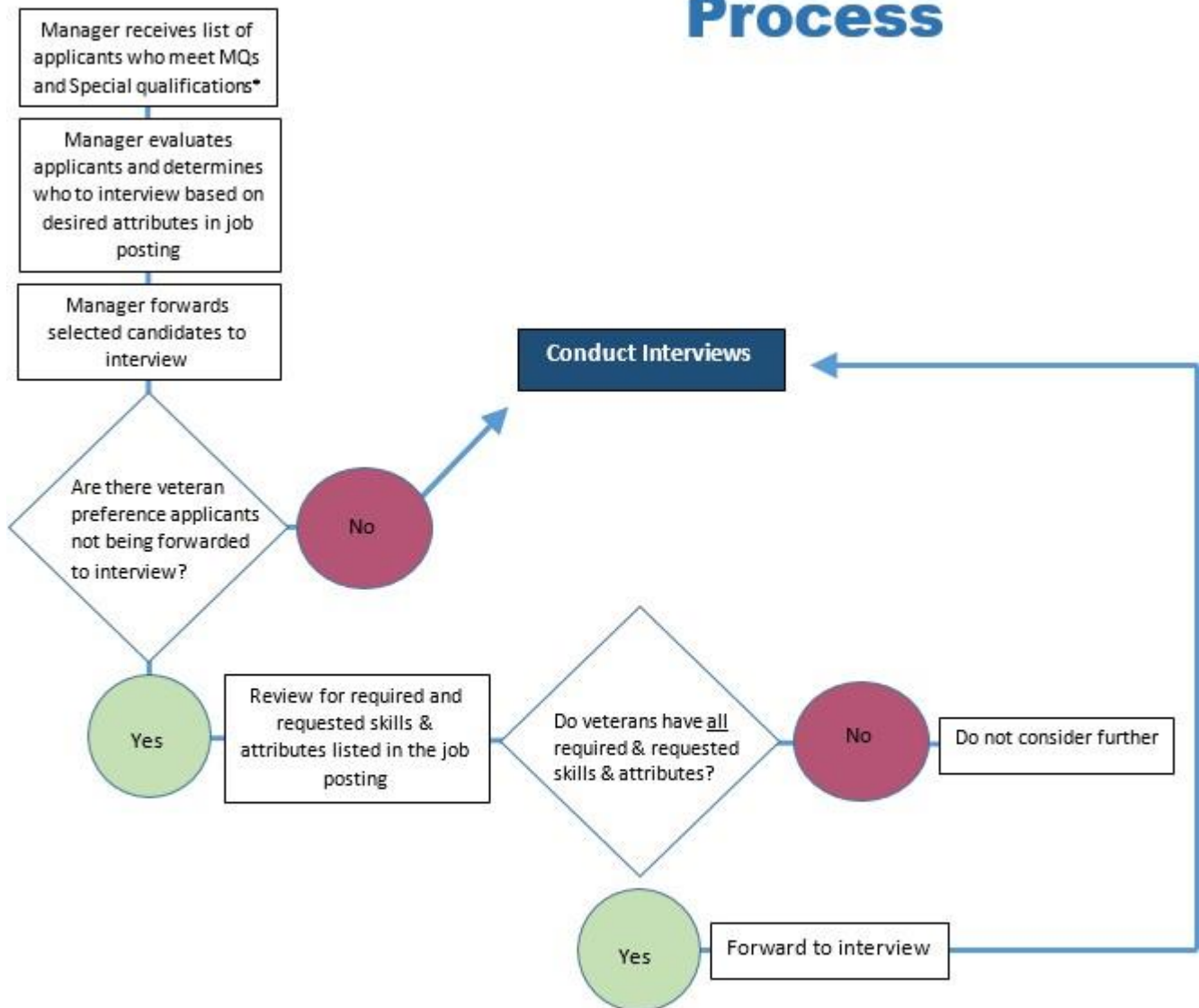
Do not overlook a veterans' preference candidate because they do not have an initial score as high as other candidates. Hiring managers will need to conduct and document a separate review of all qualified veterans' preference candidates, regardless of their score or rank compared to other candidates to ensure that veterans who possess all qualifications, skills and attributes listed in the job posting are interviewed.

INTERVIEW EXCEPTION - PREQUALIFIED APPLICANTS

The requirement to interview all veteran applicants who meet the MQ, special qualifications and all required and requested skills does not apply when applicants are selected from a pre-established eligible list of prequalified applicants. Pre-existing lists of pre-qualified applicants are most common for law enforcement and fire protection positions.



Interview Selection Process



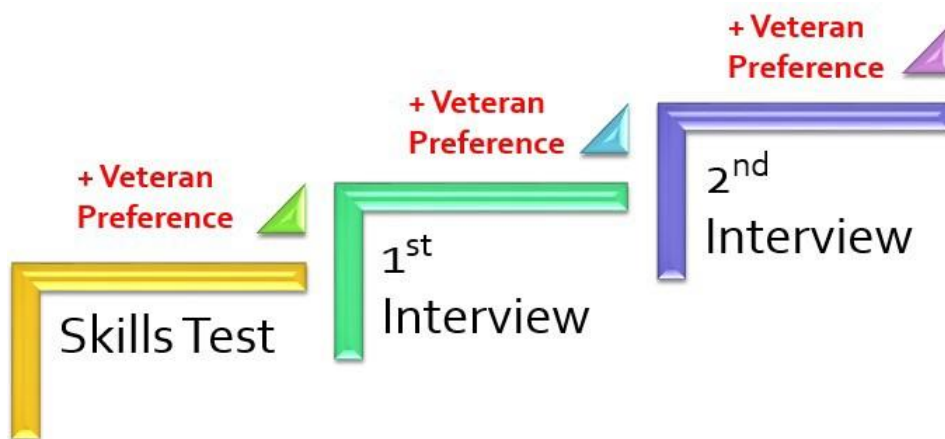
*If Manager requests a list of applicants within a score range, then all veteran preference applicants who meet MQs and special qualifications also need to be sent to the Manager.



SELECTION PROCESS

Veterans' preference is applied at each evaluation stage of the selection process. For example, there may be a skills test such as a typing test, and a first and second interview. Veterans' preference is applied at each of these stages. A stage in the selection process is when two or more candidates are compared and one or more is rejected for the position.

Where reference checks are used as a tie-breaker or to distinguish between candidates, veterans' preference must be applied. However, where reference checks are conducted only on a top candidate to ensure suitability, veterans' preference does not apply.



SCORED EVALUATION METHOD

Different evaluation methods may be used.

When using a scored evaluation method, the applicable percentage (5 or 10) is calculated based on the total score possible and added to the applicants total score after the evaluation stage is completed.

For example, if there are 80 possible points, calculate 5% or 10% of 80. Add that number to the applicant's total score.

$$80 \times .05 = 4 + 80 = 84$$

$$80 \times .10 = 8 + 80 = 88$$

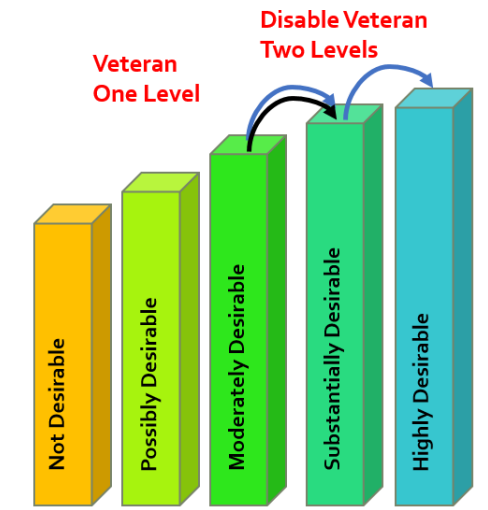


UNSCORED EVALUATION METHOD

Unscored methods that may be used are sorting or ranking based on competencies, answers to questions or by comparing strengths and weaknesses.

When using an unscored evaluation method, a veteran is elevated one level and a disabled veteran is elevated two levels.

The hiring manager may determine which level(s) to forward in the selection process. For example, the hiring manager may determine to invite all applicants in the substantially desirable pile and the highly desirable pile to a second round interview.





HIRE DECISION

At the end of the selection process, after veterans' preference has been applied and when there are equal candidates and one is a veterans' preference candidate, the veteran should be hired. A disabled veteran should be hired over the veteran candidate when deemed equal.



Hire Veteran

DOCUMENTING THE SELECTION PROCESS

It is important to document throughout the selection process for a complete and accurate record.

The documentation for the selection of applicants to interview should include:

- The required and requested skills and attributes used to screen
- How it was determined which candidates were interviewed
- That qualified veterans' preferences candidates were reviewed for all required and requested skills and attributes who were not interviewed
- Reason(s) why a veterans' preference candidate was not selected for interview
- Who was selected for an interview

The documentation for the entire selection process should include:

- Each evaluation stage
- The criteria and method used to evaluate the candidates
- The outcome of the candidate evaluation at each stage
- How it was determined which candidates were moved forward at each stage in the selection process
- That veterans' preference was applied after each evaluation stage, either in a score or unscored method
- Who was selected for the position

Ultimately documentation needs to be clear and detailed to provide a veterans' preference candidate with an explanation if not selected for an interview or if not hired for the position.



To ensure documentation is sufficient, ask the following questions:

When selecting candidates for an interview, ask yourself:

- Was a review conducted on each veteran candidate that met MQs and special qualifications for the desired attributes?
- Were only the qualifications, skills, and abilities listed in the job posting used for screening?
- What qualifications, skills and attributes were not demonstrated that prevented a veterans' preference candidate from being interviewed?

When determining who will be selected for the position, ask yourself:

- At each evaluation stage, was veterans' preference given?
- At the final selection decision, after adding preference, how was the veterans' preference candidate ranked compared to non-veteran candidates?
- Can the hiring decision be articulated and verified through evaluation forms and interview notes used throughout the selection process?
- Are the evaluation forms and interview notes easily accessible by the manager and the recruiter?



VETERANS' APPEAL RIGHTS

Veterans' preference candidates not appointed to a position may request an explanation. The hiring manager should partner with human resources when responding to a request for explanation.

The veteran candidate must request an explanation in writing. The response to the veteran must be in writing and provide the reasons for not hiring the veterans' preference candidate.

Good documentation throughout the selection process will ensure the response to the request will demonstrate veterans' preference was applied appropriately and the decision to not hire the veterans' preference candidate was based on the veteran's skills and attributes with respect to the qualifications of the position.

Note: It is important to know a veteran may also file a BOLI complaint or lawsuit in court within one year of an alleged violation of ORS 408.230 (Veterans' preference in public employment) or ORS 408.237 (Interviews of veteran applicants for public service positions required; exception.)



RESOURCES

- [40.055.04 Candidate Preference in Employment](#)
- [ORS 408.225 to 408.237](#)
- [BOLI's Veterans' Preference Guidance](#)
- [OAR 105-040-0015](#)
- [Evaluation Tools](#)
- Need help: CHRO.Policy@oregon.gov