



[www.dmh.ca.gov](http://www.dmh.ca.gov)

## HOW TO GET A JOB WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

*The Department of Mental Health provides equal opportunity to all regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, ancestry, sex, marital status, disability, religious or political affiliation, age or sexual orientation.*

Positions for the Department of Mental Health are filled via the State civil service examination process or lateral transfers. This leaflet will explain the steps necessary for obtaining a position.

### STEP 1. INFORMATION

**How to Find It:** You can learn about examinations and job openings via the Department of Mental Health's website [www.dmh.cahwnet.gov](http://www.dmh.cahwnet.gov), your local Employment Development (EDD) Office or the State Personnel Board's website [www.spb.ca.gov](http://www.spb.ca.gov).

**Examination Announcements:** When you find an examination you want to apply for, obtain a copy of the announcement from one of the websites indicated above or from your local EDD office. Read over the examination announcement carefully as you complete your application. You may also wish to refer back to it throughout the examination process.

### STEP 2. APPLYING

**How to Apply:** State Examination Application Forms (STD 678) are available from any local EDD office, any State of California agency and from the State Personnel Board's website indicated above. Read over the application carefully and answer all questions that apply to you. Please type or print neatly in ink. The completed application is an example of your reading comprehension skills, your ability to follow directions and your attention to detail. You may want to keep a copy of your completed application for yourself in case you want to refer to it at a later date. The examination announcement will tell you where and by what date you should send your application. Some examinations require a candidate to file their application in person and to bring appropriate identification when doing so. ***Late applications will not be accepted.***

**Application Review:** If you do not meet the minimum requirements for the examination, you will receive a letter within two to four weeks after the final filing date indicating where you were deficient. If you do meet the minimum qualifications and the examination does not have a written test date as listed on the application the next correspondence you will receive is a notice indicating where and when you should report for the examination.

If the application has a written test and you have not received your admittance letter five days before the

announced written date, listed on the examination announcement, call the contact listed on announcement. Staff will determine if your application was received, accepted and tell you where the test will be given and how to identify yourself to the proctor.

### **STEP 3: PREPARING FOR THE EXAMINATION**

First, read the section of the examination announcement entitled “Examination”. This will tell you what type of test will be used and what effect (or weight) each type will have on your score. There are several combinations and variations and one or a combination of the types of testing described here may be used. Second, read the “Scope” section of the announcement carefully; it will tell you what knowledges, skills and abilities will be covered in the examination.

The following types of examinations can be used:

#### **Qualifications Appraisal**

This testing method is used most often. A qualifications appraisal panel, consisting of state service representatives proficient in the knowledges and abilities for the examination being given, conduct an oral interview. The panel will determine whether your education and experience meet the entrance requirements as outlined in the examination announcement.

The panel will ask each competitor the same set of predetermined questions. The questions asked will test your knowledge and abilities as listed on the examination announcement. The panel will also assess your experience, education, and qualifications to perform the duties of the position comparatively with the other competitors. Your entire interview determines your rating, and not your answer to any single question.

#### **Written Exam**

This testing method typically consists of multiple choice questions, but may also include essay questions or a combination of both.

#### **Structured Exam**

This exam component consists of a problem(s) or exercise typically encountered on the job. Candidates prepare responses to the problem. This may include: in-basket exercises, essay problems, or hypothetical situations. This is typically used in conjunction with the oral interview, but may be used as the whole exam.

## **Performance Exam**

The test consists of actual samples of duties performed on the job. For example, applicants for a Fusion Welder may be required to weld as part of the exam process.

## **Training and Experience Evaluation**

Candidates are rated on responses to specific questions related to the testing class. These questions may be asked via a supplemental application, which may be administered on-line (INTERNET) or manually.

## **Education and Experience Evaluation**

The candidate's education and experience, as reflected on the application, is evaluated against pre-set rating standards.

## **Agility/Physical Ability**

For Hospital Police Officer and other classifications, physical agility tests are commonly given and are frequently combined with vision and hearing tests.

## **Other Measurements**

Hospital Police Officer and other custodial classifications require medical exams, background investigations and/or psychological screening interviews prior to appointment.

## **STEP 4: WHAT IS NEXT?**

The names of the competitors who have passed all parts of the examination are placed on an employment list. When there are job openings, individuals can be contacted in order of placement on the list by score, i.e., those with the highest score are contacted first. Candidates should also look for job openings on the DMH website or by calling the facility directly. Only those candidates in the first three scoring ranks can be considered for employment.

While the examination tested candidates on their general knowledge and ability to perform in the classification for which they tested, the hiring interview is specific to a particular job. Before you go to your interview you should acquaint yourself with the job you are interviewing for and tailor your remarks accordingly.

## **STEP 6: PROBATION**

When you have been hired, you will serve a probationary period of six months to one year. When you have successfully completed your probation, based on reports by your immediate supervisor, you will be a permanent State employee.

## **CHANGE OF ADDRESS**

If you move during the examination, provide the change-of-address information in writing immediately to the location conducting the examination, as indicated on the examination announcement.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR INTERVIEWING

Many candidates are apprehensive about presenting themselves in an interview. To assist you in an effective presentation of your knowledge, skills and abilities, we offer these suggestions:

- Review the examination announcement or duty statement to obtain a clear picture of the requirements and duties of the position.
- Be prepared to tell the interview panel why you believe that you are qualified for the position. Throughout the interview the panel members will give you whatever help they can, but you have the basic responsibility for the presentation of your qualifications.
- It is not necessary for you to furnish letters of recommendation or other documents relating to your proficiency or character to a qualifications appraisal; this type of information is more appropriate in a hiring interview.
- Be yourself. People make their most favorable impression when they act naturally.



## CONTACTS

**Department of Mental Health,  
Headquarters Sacramento**  
(916) 654-2351 TDD (916) 654-1782

**Atascadero State Hospital**  
(805) 468-3384 TDD 800-342-5966

**Metropolitan State Hospital**  
(562) 651-2268 TDD (562) 863-1743

**NAPA State Hospital**  
(707) 253-5000 TDD (707) 253-5768

**Patton State Hospital**  
(909) 425-7543 TDD (909) 862-5730

**Psychiatric Program at Vacaville**  
(707) 449-6514 TDD (916) 654-1782

**Salinas Valley Psychiatric Program**  
(Coming Soon)

**State Personnel Board**  
(916) 654-1502 TDD (916) 654-6336