



THE CITY OF
COLUMBUS

ANDREW J. GINTHER, MAYOR

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

COMMISSION COMMENTS

Volume 18, Issue 4
Fourth Quarter, 2019

Coming Soon: Text Messaging

(For Your Information, Texting, To Be Announced, Talk or Text You Later)

FYI...TXT...TBA...TTYL

A new feature is being added to our Jobs Center that will make it even more convenient to apply with the City of Columbus— text messaging.



a text message confirming your sign up once you've updated your information in your account.

Coming in 2020, candidates who apply with us via their GovernmentJobs.com profile will have the option to sign up for text messages from the City of Columbus. Notices about exams, scheduling, and other status updates will be available as text message alerts, along with our standard email delivery.

When you apply for a job or exam, there will be a "Text Messaging" box on the left side menu for you to enter your preferred phone number for receiving texts. You should receive

This phone number is a separate entry from your preferred contact number under your profile, so be sure to update both if you ever change phone numbers or preferences regarding how the City of Columbus should contact you.

Try it out! The convenience of being informed has had positive feedback in other cities. You can always unsubscribe from alerts if you decide it's not for you.

And don't forget, you can still check your GovernmentJobs.com applicant inbox (top right once you log in) for a copy of all emails sent from us to you.

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Emails: Don't Just Hit "Reply"

When we ask you for information, that "reply" button is very tempting!

We typically send emails through the GovernmentJobs.com website software. Any emails we send this way are automatically saved in your account. So, even if our message accidentally ends up in your junk email box, you can still access it by logging in to GovernmentJobs.com. The downside is that if you hit the "reply" button to one of those messages, it sends your response to "info@governmentjobs.com." That means your message does NOT always go directly back to the person who sent it. We will tell you in our email where to direct any responses and/or questions. Civil Service email addresses always end in "@columbus.gov" The most common Civil Service email addresses are listed on page 4 of this newsletter. Be sure to pay attention to where you are sending requested information, and don't be too fast with the "reply" button!



??? Ask Eyestein ???



To whom it may concern,

Lol...now that's funny! I have over 30 total years of customer service experience under my belt, being in the [...] industry, [...] industry, and operating my own small business in the [...] field for 8 years. How you could say I have a LACK of required work experience is truly funny! Thank you for the rib tickler...

Signed,
[Name Withheld]

Dear Rib Tickler:

To catch up our readers, the job you applied for was Customer Service Manager. Your application was rejected under "NQ1-lack of required experience." Identifying details have been removed from your letter for this publication.

When reviewing applications, an analyst is comparing what you include on your application in the education and work experience sections to the minimum qualifications (MQs) for the classification. These MQs are listed on the original job announcement posted on our website.

In this case, the MQs for Customer Service

Manager include: experience supervising others engaged in customer relations and/or customer service activities involving account maintenance, billing, customer inquiries, or service complaints. Your application did not include: duties related to supervising (such as approving vacation requests, enforcing discipline, and conducting performance appraisals), descriptions of employees you supervised

working on accounts, or some of the jobs in the industries you reference in your letter.

An application is your opportunity to tell us what you want us to know about you. There is no limit to the number of jobs you can add in the work experience section. It is through your work history/description of duties that you show us how you meet the minimum qualifications of the job for which you are applying. *If you don't write it down, we don't know that you did it.* I absolutely believe you have a wealth of experience that could make you an asset to many organizations; please consider us again as you continue your employment search.

Dear Eyestein,

I have worked in the same job at the City for 4 years. I put in an application for a supervisor position in my department and even though I only need 2 years' experience, it got rejected. I called and was told it was because I didn't include my city job on my application.

Don't you guys already know I work here?

Signed,
I Got a Paycheck Last Week

Dear City Employee:

The short answer is no. We do not know that you currently work for the City of Columbus unless you list it on your application in your work history. The system that processes your paycheck is different than that which takes in applications; your application is not "flagged" as a current employee.

To be fair and consistent, our review process is the same regardless of who is applying. We look at the

application you submit and compare the education and experience included in the education and work experience sections to the required minimum qualifications (MQs) of the job.

With the thousands of applications that come through our office for review, 99% of the time, our reviewers do not have the time to look at *who* is applying. We are focused on ensuring that the content of your application meets

the MQs. And besides, since there are over 9,000 city employees, we cannot recognize everyone's name.

An application is how you tell us you meet the MQs assigned to the job. *If you leave experience or education off of your application, we are not aware that you have it.* Additionally, our rules will not allow you to add more jobs after the application period is over.

Please log in to GovernmentJobs.com as soon as possible and update your account to include your current job—that way it will already be saved in your profile the next time you apply.



Testing Hurdles



The Civil Service Commission (CSC) uses a multi-phase hurdle approach for some examinations (e.g., entry-level police officer and firefighter tests, administrative secretary, 911 emergency call taker). Multi-phase means that there are multiple test phases within the testing process. A hurdle approach means that a candidate must pass each phase (i.e., hurdle) to be eligible to continue in the testing process. Success in passing a hurdle demonstrates that a candidate is able to perform at a level that is at least minimally competent for the job.

Certain phases of exams are graded on a pass/fail basis, whereas other phases are scored to determine placement on the eligible list. When a phase is pass/fail, a candidate must score above the minimum passing score to move on to the next phase. When a candidate fails a pass/fail phase, the candidate will be removed from the testing process; this is a hurdle. Multiple-

choice, written, physical/performance, and keystrokes per minute are some exam types that may contain hurdles.

For the police officer exam, candidates take three subtests in one day: a multiple-choice test, a writing sample, and a video-based oral exam, the Columbus Oral Police Exam (COPE). The first two exams are hurdles and will be scored first; only those who pass will be scored on the COPE exam. The COPE portion of the exam will determine each candidate's final score band on the eligible list. Anyone who fails any of these three subtest will not be invited to the physical test. Remaining candidates take a pass/fail physical test in which they must complete pushups, sit-ups and a 300 meter run within a specified time limit. Success in passing this physical hurdle demonstrates that candidates have the minimum physical requirements needed for this job. If candidates do not pass this hurdle, they will be removed from the testing process.

It is important for candidates to place as much emphasis on pass/fail phases as a phase that will determine their band. If a candidate does not pass a hurdled phase, they will be removed from the testing process.

Imagine that each phase of an exam is a hurdle on a track that you need to jump over to get to the next hurdle. After successfully "jumping" over each hurdle, you are able to pass the finish line and get your name placed on the eligible list.

The Request for Review Form

If your encounter with Civil Service made you think a different outcome should have occurred, you may wish to submit a Request for Review.

What is it? The Request for Review form is our most commonly used form. It may be submitted in response to any action taken by Civil Service staff (e.g. failure during the testing process, disapproval of an application). Submitting it means that you are requesting the Executive Director to review the status of your unique situation.

What does it require? The Request for Review form requires two basic things: (1) Your identifying information (name, Person ID, address, phone number), so we can quickly locate you in our system, and (2) your explanation of your situation and the reason(s) you believe a different outcome should have occurred, so we can understand your request.

What's the submission window? The Request for Review form must be turned in within ten (10) calendar days of the notification of failure, rejection, or other administrative action.

What happens then? Once our office receives your Request for Review, you can expect a response to be mailed to you (via U.S. mail) in approximately 10 days. A complex issue may require more time to fully investigate.



Where can I find the form? You can download the Request for Review form from our website. Visit www.columbus.gov/civilservice and click on *Public Forms* in the menu on the left side of the page or the *Public Forms* tab on the bottom right side of the page.

Some tips:

Stick to the facts. Generally a denial is based on a state/federal law, a civil service Rule, a lack of experience or education, or a missed date. Look up the appropriate law or Rule and explain why it does or does not apply to you. Leave out any narrative that does not directly support your claim.

Write as clearly and concisely as possible. If your explanation is hard to follow, vital information could be misinterpreted.

Take your time. You may be addressing an issue that you feel strongly about. If you hastily write something "just to get the form in," you may leave out vital information that could be key to the outcome you desire.

Use the "additional information attached" option. If have documentation to support your claim, check the "additional information attached" box and include the items. For example, if you were late for an exam due to a medical issue, include a note from your doctor.

Main Office and Test Center

77 North Front Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215-1895
614-645-8300
CivilService@columbus.gov
TestCenter@columbus.gov
Fax: 614-645-8379

Uniformed Test Center

1111 East Broad Street
Columbus, Ohio 43205
614-645-0848
PoliceFireTesting@columbus.gov

columbus.gov/civilservice
cscfeedback@columbus.gov

Commission Comments brought to you courtesy of:

Andrew J. Ginther, Mayor
Grady L. Pettigrew, Jr., President
Delena Edwards, Member
Stefanie Coe, Member
C. Amy DeLong, Executive Director

Articles and information contributed by:

Brenda Sobieck, Editor
Cat Emhuff, Assistant Editor
Beth Bailey
Sheri Goodwin
Karla Pierce
Chelsea Whims
Pam Cole
Matt Wonderly

Meet the Staff: Precious McElwain



Have a question about a job you applied for? Or maybe your placement on an eligible list? Wondering what happens to your Citywide Transfer form once it's submitted?

If you've ever called the Civil Service Commission or received an email from us about an eligible list, a vacancy, or other general hiring process details, there's a high chance you've made contact with our Office Assistant II, Precious McElwain.

Precious joined us back in July of 2018, and quickly became an integral part of the Applicant and Employee Services team. She came from Verizon Wireless where she worked as a Corporate and Government Coordinator. Of her time at Verizon, she says, "I learned that for every singular problem, there are multiple solutions" – an attitude that certainly translates well at the Commission! Precious likes being able to give others the tools and resources to do their jobs well, and help hopeful candidates present their best selves for opportunities with the City.

Born and raised right here in Columbus, Ohio, Precious graduated from Groveport Madison High School and accepted a scholarship to Capital University. She's currently working on completing her bachelor's degree in Communications. She's the youngest of five sisters and the "favorite sister to a younger brother – much to his annoyance." She has one little 3 year-old human of her own who "shares my likeness – just kidding, he's my twin," she says, "We're a tough little crime-fighting duo."

When she isn't working, Precious loves listening to music while hiding in bookstores, eating sweets, and watching anything that'll make her laugh – including *The Office*, of course.



WHERE IS IT?

See if you recognize the location in our title banner on the first page and email your guess to CEEmhuff@columbus.gov

We will print the answer and the names of the first five-ish* correct responses in our next issue

LAST QUARTER'S ANSWER:

Fire Training Academy

Last Quarter's First *Six:

Lesley A. Carter, *Public Utilities*
Lori LeClair, *Technology*
Mark Carter, *Technology*
Deborah Ioia, *Public Utilities*
Quang Tran, *Facilities Management*
Shane Gochenouer, *Print Services*

Retest Policy

In general, the Commission does **not** offer retests at the request of a candidate. If you want a "do-over," you most likely need to wait until the Commission offers the test again; this may be a two-year wait. However, there are some exceptions that could allow you to test sooner:

- 1) The Civil Service Commission (CSC) decides to readminister the exam.
- 2) A new test for a job has been created and will replace the previous results.
- 3) The test is a performance test such as a typing test, data-entry test, or physical test for Police Officer or Firefighter for which it's been determined it is practical to retest.

Keep in mind if you retest while your name is on a competitive eligible list for that job class, your grade and score band will be based on the second examination. If you fail the retest while your name is on the current eligible list, your name will be removed from the eligible list.

You can read more on our website under *Public Forms, Retest Policy*.