

**Pre-Interview Eligibility Determination  
Job Aid for HR Liaisons/Administrative Officers  
Human Resources Branch  
California Department of Fish and Wildlife**

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## Introduction

Per [State Personnel Board rule 250](#), all candidates must meet the Minimum Qualifications (MQ) for the classification in order to be appointed as a list or transfer candidate. The exception to this is Staff Services Analyst transfers who have taken and passed the transfer exam.

In addition to meeting MQs, a candidate must have some type of eligibility. The most common types of eligibility include:

1. List Eligible
2. Transfer Eligible

In order to be list eligible, a candidate must be reachable. Reachable is defined as being placed within the top three (3) ranks of an eligibility list.

In order to be Transfer Eligible, a candidate must be in a classification that must have a comparable salary, comparable level of responsibility, and comparable duties to the position you are advertising, or currently/previously occupied a position of the same classification.

Candidates who are not List Eligible or Transfer Eligible may still be appointed to a position through a Training and Development (T&D) Assignment or Temporary Authorization Appointment (TAU). **Please contact your [Classification and Pay \(C&P\) Analyst](#) for more information on these types of Eligibility.**

**If you receive an applicant who is SROA/General Re-Employment, please contact your C&P Analyst and place the eligibility determination process on hold until you receive further direction.**

Note: **Hiring Units are the only staff authorized to complete pre-Interview Eligibility Determinations. This includes Hiring Supervisors, staff assisting the Hiring Supervisors, HR Liaisons and Administrative Officers only.** The Human Resources Branch (HRB) will ultimately determine whether or not the candidate meets MQs during the final eligibility, and their decision is final. In other words, you may find the candidate meets the MQs and HRB may disagree because eligibility determinations are not always straight forward. In order to assist HRB in making the best decision, if the MQs require specific documents (e.g. official transcripts, diploma, certificate, etc.), please make sure you ask the candidate to bring those documents to the interview.

## Meeting Minimum Qualifications

Each classification possesses specific Minimum Qualifications that must be met by a candidate prior to appointment. These minimum qualifications can be found on the Job Specification for the classification. You can find the Job Specification on California Department of Human Resources (CalHR) [Job Specification Search Page](#).

**Step 1: Find the Job Specification of the Position you are recruiting for on CalHR's Website here:** <https://www.calhr.ca.gov/state-hr-professionals/Pages/job-descriptions.aspx>

**Step 2: Locate the Minimum Qualifications on the Job Specification. Identify all experience and education requirements.**

**Patterns** – many MQs have “patterns”. Candidates can meet the MQs for a classification by meeting one pathway identified in the patterns, or a combination of the patterns. Generally, Pattern I is for candidates who already possess State Services and are currently employed in a classification within the series. Pattern II allows candidate outside state service or outside the classification series to meet minimum qualifications.

[Example: Senior Environmental Scientist \(Specialist or Supervisory\)](#)

**MQs:**

All Levels of Environmental Scientist Series:

**Education:** Possession of a bachelor's or advanced degree with a major in a biological, chemical, physical, or environmental science, soil science, water science, hydrology, agronomy, natural resource science, environmental or public health, physical geography, or a closely related scientific discipline. (Admission to a masters or doctoral degree program in a biological, chemical, physical, or environmental science, soil science, water science, hydrology, agronomy, natural resource science, environmental or public health, physical geography, or a closely related scientific discipline shall be considered to meet these education qualifications.)

AND

Either I

**[Pattern 1]** Experience: Two years of experience in the California state civil service performing the duties of an Environmental Scientist, Range C.

Or II

**[Pattern 2]** Experience: Five years of increasingly responsible professional experience as a scientist in environmental analysis, research, management, planning, regulation, or investigation, two years of which have included responsibility in the development or implementation of environmental policies, programs, plans, or research projects; or conducting an environmental monitoring and surveillance, enforcement, or environmental management program; or in the direction of the work of a multidisciplinary environmental investigatory or regulatory staff, at a level equivalent to that of an Environmental Scientist, Range C, in the California state civil service. Possession of a master's

degree in a biological, chemical, physical, or environmental science, soil science, water science, hydrology, agronomy, natural resource science, environmental or public health, physical geography, or a closely related scientific discipline may be substituted for one year of the required general experience; possession of a doctorate in the above-named disciplines may be substituted for two years of the general experience.

**Candidates who are currently employed as an Environmental Scientist, Range C, and have been in this position for at least 2 years, will meet the MQs for the Senior Environmental Scientist through Pattern 1. However, it is not always this simple. See below.**

**Step 3: Review the candidate applications, paying close attention to experience, education, and time spent in each classification.**

Scenarios for Senior Environmental Scientist MQ Determination:

1. Candidate A has ONE year of experience as an Environmental Scientist, Range C, but was a professional Biologist in the private sector for 3 years prior to joining state service. Do they meet MQs?

**YES.** Candidate A meets 50% of Pattern I because they have worked as an Environmental Scientist, Range C, for one of the two years. Candidate A also meets 60% of Pattern 2 because they have 3 of the 5 years of professional experience as a scientist in one of the identified areas.  $50\% + 60\% = 110\%$ , meeting MQs through a combination of Patterns.

2. Candidate B has 1.5 years of experience as an Environmental Scientist, Range C, but also has a master's degree in environmental science. Do they meet MQs?

**NO.** Candidate B meets 75% of Pattern I. Because they have an appropriate Masters Degree, they may use the degree to substitute for one (1) of the five (5) years of experience needed for Pattern 2 (20%).  $75\% + 20\% = 95\%$ , not quite meeting MQs.

If your candidate does not meet the minimum qualifications for your advertised position, please notate that candidate "DOES NOT MEET MQS" and retain the application for the recruitment file. If you are unsure, please reach out to your C&P Analyst for assistance.

If your candidate does meet the minimum qualifications for your advertised position, continue with your eligibility determination.

**Determining List Eligibility**

One means of eligibility after MQs are met is through List Eligibility. To have List Eligibility, a candidate must be within the top three (3) ranks of the Certification List. HR

Liaisons and Administrative Officers may move forward with interviewing candidates deemed “Reachable” in the ECOS **Hiring Manager’s Report**.

**Five (5) days after the Final Filing Date** of your recruitment, your C&P Analyst will email you a PDF copy of the Hiring Manager’s Report. This report includes all reachable candidates for your recruitment.

**IF** the candidate you are interested in interviewing is on the report as reachable, they have list eligibility and are within the top three (3) ranks of the certification list.

**Note:** Please pay close attention to eligibility expiration dates listed on the report! Those with expired eligibility will need to re-take the exam and be reachable prior to accepting an offer for the position.

**IF** candidate is not on the certification list, you may also reach out to HRB for confirmation and to discuss options.

### **Determining Transfer Eligibility**

Under State Personnel Board Rules 250 and 430 - 433, candidates may transfer from one job class to another without examination **if they meet the minimum qualifications of the class to which you wish to transfer, the levels of duties, responsibility, and salary of the two classes are substantially the same and the two classes are not in the same series**. The transfer must not constitute a promotion. Candidates with Transfer Eligibility do not need to be on a Certification List in order to be eligible for appointment.

A candidate has transfer eligibility if they are **currently employed** in the position or if all of the following is met:

#### Step 1: Current position is comparable to the advertised position in salary

Comparable salary is defined as the maximum salaries of the current and proposed salaries being within two salary steps minus \$1 of each other. One salary step is 5%. You can find maximum salaries on [CalHR’s Payscale](#)

How to make this determination:

1. Multiply the top step of the candidate’s current class by 1.05;
2. Round off to a whole number;
3. Multiply that number by 1.05;
4. Round off to a whole number;
5. Subtract \$1
6. If this number is equal to or less than the maximum salary of your advertised position, then the salaries are comparable and you may move on to Step 2. If not, Transfer Eligibility is not an option.

For Deep Ranges, please use the range in the which the candidate is in when determining Maximum Salary. For example, if candidate is an Environmental Scientist Range B, you will use the maximum salary of Range B to compare to the maximum salary of the advertised position.

For example, the maximum salary of the Research Data Analyst II is \$6771. The maximum salary of Environmental Scientist Range C is \$7364.

$$\$6771 * 1.05 = 7109.55$$

$$7110 * 1.05 = 7465.5$$

$$7466 - 1 = \$7465$$

$\$7465 > \$7364$ , therefore the salaries of the two classifications are comparable.

### **How about the Environmental Scientist Range B and Research Data Analyst II?**

The maximum salary of Environmental Scientist Range B is \$5807.

$$\$5807 * 1.05 = 6097.35$$

$$6097 * 1.05 = 6401.85$$

$$6402 - 1 = \$6401$$

$\$6401 < \$7364$ , therefore the salaries of the two classifications **are not** comparable.

### **How about the Environmental Scientist Range C and the Research Data Specialist I?**

The maximum salary of the Research Data Specialist I is \$7080.

$$\$7080 * 1.05 = 7434$$

$$7434 * 1.05 = 7805.70$$

$$7804 - 1 = \$7803$$

$\$7803 > \$7364$ , therefore the salaries of the two classifications **are** comparable.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Comparable salary is based off of the employee's last AO1 appointment (list eligibility), **not their current classification**. It is not possible to make this determination until the Final Eligibility Determination, as it requires reaching out to the candidate's home department and requesting employment history.

### **Step 2: Current position is comparable to the advertised position in level of responsibility**

For this step, you will need to consult with [CalHR's Job Specification](#). Each classification includes a level of responsibility in the job spec. Look out for language such as:

- Under close supervision
- Under general supervision
- Under direction/Under general direction
- Independently

If the candidate's current classification has identical language regarding level of responsibilities to the advertise position, it is safe to assume the level of responsibility is comparable.

### **Research Data Analyst II & Environmental Scientist Range B**

For example, the Research Data Analyst II is “under general supervision”; similarly, the Environmental Scientist Range B is also “under general supervision”. The level of responsibility for the two classifications are comparable. **Unfortunately, because the salaries are not within two salary steps, the transfer is not permitted.**

### **Research Data Analyst II & Environmental Scientist Range C**

However, the level of responsibility of the Environmental Scientist, Range C, is “Under direction”. This is a greater level of responsibility, meaning the Research Data Analyst is comparable in responsibility to the Environmental Scientist Range B, but **not comparable to the Environmental Scientist Range C, despite the salaries being comparable.**

### **Research Data Specialist I & Environmental Scientist Range C**

The level of responsibility of the Research Data Specialist I, however, is “under general direction”, which is comparable to the Environmental Scientist Range C's “under direction. So far, these two classifications are comparable in level of responsibility and salary.

#### Step 3: Current position is comparable to the advertise position in level of duties

The final step, and perhaps the most difficult, is determining if the level of duties of the two classifications are comparable. Things to consider:

1. What type of work does each classification do? Identify key words such as “analysis”, “investigation”, “report writing”, etc
2. How independent must the work be done?

Let's take a look at the Research Specialist I and the Environmental Scientist Range C. They are comparable in salary and level of responsibility, but are they comparable in level of duties?

### **Research Specialist I**

Under general direction, incumbents independently develop and utilize research methodology and techniques in areas where precedents are lacking, or a sparse body

of knowledge or experience in the area exists. Incumbents work independently with primary responsibility for a major project or activity.

Incumbents are responsible for a wide range of **research and analytical duties** regarding complex statistical data including **statistical investigation** for use in the resolution of multiple program related issues; gathering, developing, implementing, and monitoring systems and procedures to assemble and structure necessary data; validating the accuracy of structured and unstructured data being reported; identifying relationships and trends in order to forecast potential risk; recognize improvement opportunities; ensure compliance with performance metrics, and support change in state programs or systems; and may **provide consultative advice** or support interpreting existing reports and data models to various governmental entities and agencies. Incumbents have a strong understanding of statistical methodologies and business intelligence software applications with a background in a specific occupational area.

### **Environmental Scientist, Range C**

Range C is the journey level. Under direction, incumbents perform a variety of responsible professional scientific office and field work. Incumbents independently perform assigned public health, environmental, agricultural productivity, and natural resource management **analysis, research, surveys, investigations, and studies**; write final reports; prepare regulatory and compliance documents; enforce environmental law and regulations; prepare non-routine correspondence and answer non-routine questions from the public; and do other related work. Incumbents allocated to this level perform a variety of tasks including the more responsible, varied, and complex assignments; incumbents may **provide consultative advice** to various governmental entities and agencies. Work at this level is often characterized by independent development and use of techniques and methodologies. Incumbents may be assigned lead responsibility for a specific project.

Both classifications include duties involving investigations, analysis, and research. It appears that the level of duties between the Research Data Specialist I and the Environmental Scientist, Range C, are comparable in salary, duties, and responsibility. You may move forward with interviewing this candidate, however, please note the HRB will make the final determination regarding Transfer Eligibility. You may submit your analysis to your C&P Analyst for confirmation prior to interviewing if you are unsure of your determination.

NOTE: In order to be transfer eligible, candidate **MUST** meet the minimum qualifications of the advertised position.

REMINDER: The HRB will reach out to the candidate's home department for Transfer Eligibility confirmation after the interview and reference check process.

### **Helpful Tips**



When completing MQ Checks, you will discuss that some classifications at other departments are utilized differently, making some candidates eligible and others not eligible, depending on where they work.

For Example:

The California Department of Transportation (CalTrans) does not use the Associate Environmental Planner in a fashion that would allow our department to apply this experience towards the Senior Environmental Scientist minimum qualifications. Associate Environmental Planners from all other departments can use their experience for the SES MQs, though.

This is not uncommon, as every department utilizes classifications differently.

### Professional Experience

The term professional experience is clearly defined in [California Code of Regulations, Government Code 3521.5](#) as:

*The term “professional employee” means (a) any employee engaged in work (1) predominantly intellectual and varied in character as opposed to routine mental, manual, mechanical, or physical work; (2) involving the consistent exercise of discretion and judgment in its performance; (3) of such a character that the output produced or the result accomplished cannot be standardized in relation to a given period of time; (4) requiring knowledge of an advanced type in a field of science or learning customarily acquired by a prolonged course of specialized intellectual instruction and study in an institution of higher learning or a hospital, as distinguished from a general academic education or from an apprenticeship or from training in the performance of routine mental, manual, or physical processes; or (b) any employee, who (1) has completed the courses of specialized intellectual instruction and study described in paragraph 4 of subdivision (a), and (2) is performing related work under the supervision of a professional person to qualify himself to become a professional employee as defined in subdivision (a).*

The State Personnel Board (SPB) has ruled in several cases that technical experience gained from positions such as the Scientific Aid and Fish and Wildlife Technician do not constitute Professional Experience and shall not be used to Meet MQs.

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