



# Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

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## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Agency Human Resources Directors and Managers

**From:** Jessica Knieling, Chief Human Resources Officer  
Department of Administrative Services

**Date:** December 30, 2025

**Subject:** Addendum B – Candidate Preference in Employment

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***Bold and italicized*** text reflects revisions and additions to current policy language.

**Addendum Purpose:** *As of January 1, 2026, the Executive Branch of state government modifies the Candidate Preference in Employment policy due to new legislation passed (Senate Bill 808) in the 2025 legislative session.*

**Policy Authority:** ORS 408.225 to 408.237, 240.306, 184.340, 284.771 to 284.801

**Applicability:** All employees, including temporary employees, according to provisions of state law.

**Attachments:** None

### **Policy Amendments**

Effective January 1, 2026, Candidate Preference in Employment 40.055.04 is amended as follows:

(3) ***Veterans', Disabled Veterans', and current/former members of the Oregon National Guard ("Servicemembers") Preference.***

(a) ***Veterans' Candidate*** preference is applied ***for veterans, disabled veterans, and current or former servicemembers of the Oregon National Guard whenever a***

competitive selection process is conducted including new hire, promotion, job rotation, developmental assignment and temporary hires. Candidate preference is applied at every stage in the selection process.

(b) Qualifying for **veterans' candidate** preference

(A) An agency awards **veterans' candidate** preference points when an applicant:

- (i) Submits all required application materials and follows application instructions; and
- (ii) Meets all minimum qualifications and special qualifications of the position; and
- (iii) Meets the requirements to qualify as a veteran or disabled veteran, **or a current or former servicemember of the Oregon National Guard**, as defined by statute and submits military documents as verification:

Veterans (qualifying for a 5-percentage preference)

- (I) A copy of the Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty (DD214 or 215) **indicating service of at least 178 consecutive days or at least 1 day in a combat zone, and honorable discharge or a combat/campaign ribbon or expeditionary medal**, or a letter from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs indicating the applicant receives a non-service-connected pension; or
- (II) **Submits a** A certification indicating the applicant is expected to be discharged or released from active duty under honorable conditions not later than 120 days after the submission of the certification.

Disabled Veterans (qualifying for a 10-percentage preference)

- (III) A copy of form DD214 **indicating separated from active duty under honorable conditions** and a copy of a letter from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs indicating a disability rating unless the information is included on the DD214 or 215; or
- (IV) A copy of a letter from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs indicating the person is receiving service-connected compensation; or

(V) **Submits a** A certification indicating the applicant is expected to be medically separated from active duty under honorable conditions not later than 120 days after the submission of the certification.

**Oregon National Guard Servicemembers (qualifying for a 5-percentage preference)**

(VI) **A copy of the Retirement Accounting Statement (federal DA Form 5016); or**

(VII) **A copy of a Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty (a federal DD form 214 or 214-1); or**

(VIII) **A copy of a National Guard Report of Separation and Record of Service (a federal NGB Form 22); or**

(IX) **A summary of benefits letter from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, or any other official document, provided that the document demonstrates you are a state servicemember or former state servicemember; or**

(X) **A certification indicating the applicant is expected to be discharged or released from service from the Oregon National Guard under honorable conditions not later than 120 days after the submission of the certification.**

(B) For **veterans' candidate** preference to apply, the agency must receive the military documents normally at time of application but no later than at the time of interview. Military documents should be submitted through the Chief Human Resources Office information system, but may be submitted to the recruiter as needed.

(C) **Preference Candidate preference** is applied whether a scored numerical rating method or an unscored method, such as a pile system, is used.

(D) Once an agency awards **veterans' candidate** preference and records it in the state's human resources information system, the military documents do not need to be submitted again.

(c) Screening **veteran** candidates

(A) The hiring agency considers all of the following when determining the skills and attributes of the **veteran applicant** candidate:

- (i) Education
- (ii) Work experience
- (iii) 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
- (iv) Transferable skills, i.e., skills obtained through military education or experience that substantially relate, directly or indirectly, to the position.

(B) The hiring agency screens only for skills and attributes listed in the job posting.

(C) The veteran, **disabled veteran, or servicemember** must provide sufficient evidence in the requested application materials for the hiring agency to determine if the veteran possesses the qualifications, skills and attributes for the position.

(d) Interviewing veteran **and disabled veteran** candidates (**excludes Oregon National Guard servicemember**)

(A) The hiring agency interviews all veteran **and disabled veteran** candidates who:

- (i) Meet the evaluation criteria for an interview to be granted (after application of veterans' preference) as determined by the hiring agency; or
- (ii) Meet all the required and requested skills and attributes listed in the job posting.

- (I) If the veteran candidate does not meet criteria in (i), the agency must review the veteran's application materials for (ii).
- (B) The hiring agency must document the reason if a veteran **or disabled veteran** is not selected for an interview.
- (C) Veterans **and disabled veterans** from a pre-qualified list established by pre-employment tests who will be considered for hire from a ranked order do not have to be interviewed. Pre-qualified lists are typically established by law enforcement and fire protection agencies.

(e) Applying **veterans' candidate** preference throughout the selection process

- (A) **Veterans' Candidate** preference is applied at each stage of the selection process, including, but not limited to, an interview.
- (B) A stage in the process occurs when two or more applicants are evaluated and one or more applicants are rejected for the position.
- (C) **Veterans' preference is applied on reference checks used as a tiebreaker or to distinguish between candidates. Veterans' preference does not apply when reference checks are conducted only on a top candidate to ensure suitability. The reference checking stage is not subject to candidate preference except in the event that reference checking is being used to determine a finalist when there is a tie, in which case candidate preference shall be awarded to an eligible candidate.**

(D) The hiring agency may use a scored or unscored evaluation method.

- (i) Scored evaluation method
  - (I) The applicable percentage (5 or 10) is calculated based on the total score possible and added to the applicant's total points.
- (ii) Unscored evaluation method
  - (I) Veterans **or servicemembers** will advance one level and disabled veterans will advance two levels.

(II) The hiring agency may choose the number of levels or rankings and define the levels and rankings such as:

- (aa) Sorting levels or piles (for example, "highly desirable," "substantially desirable," "moderately desirable," "possibly desirable," "not desirable")
- (bb) Ranking (comparing a candidate's skills and attributes to another candidate)

(E) The hiring agency may choose the evaluation criteria such as:

- (i) Strengths and weaknesses
- (ii) Competencies (skills and attributes)
- (iii) Responses to interview questions

(F) The hiring agency must define and document the evaluation method and criteria.

(f) Selection

(A) An agency appoints a veteran, ***disabled veteran, or servicemember*** applicant if at the final stage of the selection process the veteran, ***disabled veteran, or servicemember*** is ranked equal to or higher than a non-veteran ***or disabled veteran/non-servicemember*** candidate ***after application of the appropriate preference.***

(B) A disabled veteran will be appointed over a veteran ***or servicemember*** when deemed equal at the final stage of the selection process.

***(C) A tie between a veteran and a servicemember may result in further examination of the two candidates to determine the finalist.***

Please email the CHRO Policy Unit if you have any questions.