

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION  
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**All Department and Activity Heads are requested to post this Bulletin in all work places and ensure that all employees have access to this information.**

**CSC Bulletin 18-01**

December 27, 2017

To all Department and Activity Heads:

Subject: Exceptions to Civil Service Class Specification minimum education requirements

The Civil Service Commission recognizes the value of both employee experience and education in qualifying for Civil Service positions. The purpose of this policy is to provide opportunity for employees/applicants with qualifying experience to fill a Civil Service position while working to complete the education requirement. This policy emphasizes the Commission's support for employees striving to improve their education level, thereby enhancing their capability for providing quality and effective public service to the Commonwealth community. The Commission encourages Government employees to utilize the Prior Learning Assessment program at the Northern Marianas College to obtain academic credit for their work experience as part of their degree program. Education achievement will improve an employee's future employment and advancement opportunities.

**Education Qualification Requirements Exception Policy**

**POLICY STATEMENT**

This policy provides for exceptions to the Civil Service Class Specification minimum education requirements. The desired minimum qualifications are those established in each position's Class Specification. If the minimum qualification includes an education level, that level of education is the desired requirement. However, in those cases where an applicant with the desired education level is not available and the Class Specification allows the substitution of an equivalent amount of additional experience, the Commission authorizes the Director of Personnel to fill the position on a Special Limited Term Status with an applicant or employee who is making a legitimate effort to attain the required education level and is otherwise qualified. Such an action will be in accordance with this policy and, as an exception to the approved Class Specifications, subject to the approval of the Civil Service Commission.

**POLICY SCOPE**

This policy applies to all Civil Service positions where the minimum qualification requirements allow an equivalent amount of additional experience in lieu of the education requirements. It

applies to both internal and external applicants and to both new hires, lateral transfers, reclassifications, reallocations, promotions and other relevant personnel actions.

### **POLICY PROVISIONS**

The Civil Service Commission recognizes the value of both education and experience in preparing employees to meet the minimum qualifications for positions within the Civil Service system. The minimum qualification requirements established for positions in the relevant Class Specification establishes both the education and experience considered to be appropriate for the demands of the position. The Commission is aware that it is not always possible to find an applicant with the desired education requirement. It also recognizes that an applicant may be capable of performing the primary functions of the position while not meeting the full education qualifications determined necessary for optimum performance. In such cases, upon the request of the Appointing Authority and a positive evaluation by the Director of Personnel, an applicant may be hired in a Special Limited Term status if the applicant has the equivalent experience in lieu of education and is actively working to meet the educational requirement. As an exception to the approved Class Specifications, such an action is subject to the approval of the Civil Service Commission.

The approved employee will be compensated at one pay-level below the established pay-level of the position in a one-year Special Limited Term appointment. The employee's continuing educational efforts will be monitored and the employee eligible for annual renewal and will be subject at any time to termination with a two-week notice, if the Director of Personnel determines that the employee is no longer working satisfactorily to attain the education requirement. Such termination will be reviewed and approved or disapproved by the Civil Service Commission. This termination will not require adverse action procedures and, being reviewed and approved by the Commission, is not subject to appeal or grievance procedures. Every effort will be made to return a former permanent Civil Service employee to a position at the same level held prior to accepting the Limited Term appointment.

### **EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES**

Applicants/employees selected for an Education Qualification Requirements Exception appointment will sign an agreement explaining the conditions and expectation of such appointments. They will also sign an agreement to continuing educational effort and an understanding of the consequences of not complying. Employees are responsible for all aspects of continuing their educational efforts and providing the Office of Personnel with grade reports and any other documents required for the monitoring of their compliance with the requirements of this policy.

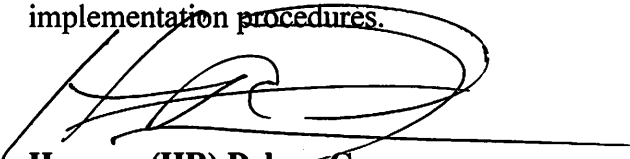
### **DIRECTOR OF PERSONNEL'S RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Director of Personnel will ensure that every effort is made by the department/activity of the position in question and by the Office of Personnel Management to fill all positions with applicants or employees fully meeting the Class Specification requirements. When it is necessary to fill a position with someone lacking the required education requirements, the Director will review the qualifications and educational efforts of the applicant/employee recommended by the Appointing Authority and, if also recommending, will present the proposed application to the Commission for its decision. The Director of Personnel will monitor the employee's educational efforts and determine their eligibility for continued employment and for

annual renewal of the Special Limited Term status. As these appointments are exceptions to the approved requirements of the Classification Specifications, the Director will present recommendations for the appointments, the renewal of the appointments, and the termination of the appointments, to the Civil Service Commission for its approval or disapproval.

**POLICY RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Civil Service Commission is responsible for developing and revising this policy. The Director of Personnel is responsible for the administration of this policy and the development of implementation procedures.



**Herman (HR) Deleon Guerrero**  
**Chairman, Civil Service Commission**

- cc: Governor
- Lieutenant Governor
- All Members of the Senate
- All Members of the House of Representatives
- Public Auditor
- Attorney General