

Wisconsin Human Resources Handbook

Chapter 204

Assessment Scoring and Register Establishment

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Sec. 204.010 Introduction

The purpose of this handbook chapter is to provide guidance to human resources staff who process application materials and establish registers. The chapter includes procedures for computing civil service scores, breaking ties in assessment scores, and ranking eligible candidates, establishing registers, and maintaining registers.

For certain types of assessments, including Resume Screens, Training and Experience Assessments, Objective Inventory Questionnaires, Oral Examinations, and Essays, civil service scores are determined by following the procedures outlined in section 204.050 of this handbook chapter, Computing Civil Service Scores.

Sec. 204.020 Statutory and Rule Authority

1. “Recruitment for classified positions shall be an active continuous process conducted in a manner that assures a diverse, highly qualified group of applicants; and shall be conducted on the broadest possible base consistent with sound personnel management practices and an approved affirmative action plan or program. Due consideration shall be given to the provisions of s. 230.19.” s. 230.14(1).
2. “In advertising openings in the classified civil service, the state may not require as a condition of application that an applicant be a college graduate unless the opening is a position as a forensic scientist in a state or regional crime laboratory or unless the opening must be filled by an incumbent holding a credential, as defined in s. 440.01(2)(a), or other license, permit, certificate or registration in an occupation regulated by law and college graduation is required to obtain the occupational credential, license, permit, certification or registration.” s. 230.14(3m).
3. “Appointments to, and promotions in, the classified service shall be made only according to merit and fitness, which shall be ascertained so far as practicable by competitive procedures.” s. 230.15(1), Wis. Stats.
4. “In the interest of sound personnel management, consideration of applicants and service to agencies, the director may set a standard for proceeding to subsequent steps in the selection process, provided that all applicants are fairly treated, and due notice has been given. The director shall utilize appropriate scientific techniques and procedures in administering the selection process, in rating the results of any evaluations used in the selection process and in determining the relative ratings of the competitors.” s. 230.16(5), Wis. Stats.
5. “The director shall certify, under this subchapter and the rules of the director, from the register of eligible appropriate for the kind and type of employment, the grade and class in which the position is classified, any number of names at the head thereof.” s. 230.25(1), Wis. Stats.

6. “Subject to par. (b), the term of eligibility on registers is 6 months and thereafter the register expires but may be reactivated by the administrator for up to 3 years from the date of the establishment of the register.” s. 230.25(3)(a); “The director may allow a register to expire after 3 months, but only after considering the impact of such an action on the policy of this state to provide for equal employment opportunity and to take affirmative action, as specified in s. 230.01(2).” s. 230.25(3)(b).

Note: s. 230.05(3)(a), Wis. Stats. was not updated by 2015 Wisconsin Act 55 and continues to include the term “administrator.” The responsibility of this section lies with the BMRS Director and the above quote has been modified to reflect this.

7. “The director may establish a new and separate register for a specific position or class only when in the director’s judgment there is no appropriate existing register from which appointments may be made.” s. 230.25(4)(a), Wis. Stats; “The director may establish separate registers for various geographic areas of the state if the needs of the service so require, provided proper publicity has been given of the intent to establish such registers.” s. 230.25(4)(b).
8. “An existing appropriate register for a class shall be used to fill all vacancies in the class, except that the director may authorize a new recruitment leading to the establishment of a different register for some positions in the class when substantial differences in the duties of those positions and the qualifications required for successful performance distinguish them from other positions in the same class. The director may also establish separate registers on the basis of geographic location or when program emphasis or other recognized employment considerations could be expected to attract new applicants who may be better qualified for “placement on the new register” to be established. Separate registers for different positions in the same class may also be established under s. [ER-MRS 11.02](#).” s. ER-MRS 6.04, Wis. Adm. Code.
9. “The director shall make available to each applicant the final results of his or her eligibility for consideration through such methods as written notice, public posting or any other means deemed appropriate by the director.” s. ER-MRS 6.07, Wis. Adm. Code.
10. “The director shall establish and maintain employment registers needed to fill positions in the classified service.” s. ER-MRS 11.01(1), Wis. Adm. Code; “Employment registers under s. ER-MRS 11.02, may be established by functional grouping of titles, class title, subtitle or recruitment option.” s. ER-MRS 11.01(2), Wis. Adm. Code; “Names may be integrated into employment registers when, in the judgement of the director, the needs of the service will be benefited.” s. ER-MRS 11.01(3), Wis. Adm. Code.
11. “Open competitive registers are registers that are established through competition open to all qualified applicants within and outside of the service.” s. ER-MRS 11.02(1); “Registers may be established on a geographic basis with the approval of the director.” s. ER-MRS 11.02(3).
12. “Eligibility on a register continues for 6 months from the date the register was established or, on an integrated register, 6 months from the date the individual is placed on the register. The director may allow a register to expire after 3 months, but only after considering the impact of such an action on the policy of this state to provide for equal employment opportunity and to take affirmative action, as specified in s. 230.01(2), Stats.” s. ER-MRS 11.03(1), Wis. Adm. Code.
13. “The director may reactivate a register up to one year from the date it was established. The appointing authority may request an extension of the reactivation, not to exceed a total of 3 years. Names on the reactivated register may be integrated with those on a subsequently established register.” s. ER-MRS 11.03(2), Wis. Adm. Code.
14. “Lacking a complete certification from a register, the appointing authority may request additional names to complete the certification from another appropriate register as determined by the director.” s. ER-MRS 12.04(1), Wis. Adm. Code.

15. “The director may certify additional names from registers of related classes in the same, counterpart or higher pay ranges to fill out an incomplete certification or may make a certification from registers of classes in the same, counterpart or higher pay ranges when no register exists for the class for which certification is requested. Such decisions shall include a determination by the director that the competitive procedures for the same or higher classes or classes in counterpart pay ranges are job related for the work of the position for which certification is to be made.” s. ER-MRS 12.04(2), Wis. Adm. Code.

Sec. 204.030 Definitions

The following are definitions of terms used in this chapter:

1. **Assessment:** A separate and distinct part of a competitive selection process used as an evaluation device. Assessments may be made up of a single component (for example, resume screen, training and experience assessment) or multiple components (for example, multiple choice and simulation exercise).
2. **Civil service score:** A score that is converted from the raw score to a civil service scale, with a passing point of 70 and a maximum of 100.
3. **Eligibles:** Those applicants for employment who have achieved a passing grade (numeric or eligible) and are therefore eligible for further consideration at the next step of the hiring process.
4. **Final grade rank:** The position an eligible applicant holds on a register, based on his or her final numerical grade in comparison to other applicants. No rank will exist for non-numerical results (i.e., eligible/ineligible).
5. **Passing point:** A minimum acceptable standard, which may be a numerical score, a letter grade, or a determination of eligibility (e.g., a license requirement), determined to be the point at which an applicant has passed an assessment.
6. **Raw score:** The unadjusted score on an assessment, often determined by counting the number of correct answers, but more generally a sum or other combination of item or question scores.
7. **Reciprocal conversion:** A formula which converts raw scores on one scale to a civil service scale score of 70 or more, using a 30-point-passing spread (i.e., 70 - 100).
8. **Register:** List of applicants who have completed the application process and have been deemed eligible or minimally qualified. Applicants may be assigned passing civil service scores and be ranked on the register based on those scores if the assessment used a numerical score to determine eligibility. If the assessment applied pass/fail or eligible/not eligible to applicants and (by default) therefore no numerical score, all applicants deemed passing or eligible will be placed on a register.
9. **Successive hurdles:** A method of assessment whereby an applicant must pass or meet some predetermined standard on a given component of a multiple-component assessment before they may compete in the next component of the assessment. It also may pertain to passing one assessment before being eligible to participate in the following assessment.

Sec. 204.040 Combining Assessment Components

The criteria assessed, types of assessments used, and scoring method must be documented. (see [Chapter 176](#)—Competitive Selection Procedures. of the *Wisconsin Human Resources Handbook*.)

Two different approaches may be used when using multiple assessment components.

1. **Successive hurdles:** The first method of combining results of multiple assessment components is by administering each component consecutively and allowing only those who pass or meet some standard on the

first component to compete in the next stage or component. The raw score is generally based on the results of the final component.

The successive hurdles method may be used if the applicant completes multiple assessment components at the same time (e.g., including an Objective Inventory Questionnaire (OIQ) with a Resume Screen). Generally when using this method, the applicant must pass one component to have the second component reviewed. For example, reviewing the applicant's resume if the applicant passed the OIQ component. The final grade and ranking are based on the results of both components.

The successive hurdles approach should be used when there are minimum qualifications that are mandatory or critical for successful job performance of the work (e.g., licensure). Applicants must meet these minimum qualifications, and absence or weakness cannot be compensated for by strength in other areas.

2. **Compensatory model:** The second method of combining results of multiple components—the compensatory model—allows all applicants to compete in all assessment parts, components, or stages, with the final result based on the combination of the results for all components. The relative weight of each component should be documented.

Note: In this approach, an applicant may fail or do poorly on one or more parts, components, or stages, but be considered eligible by rating higher in other parts, components, or stages.

When combining results from multiple components or stages, it is sometimes desirable to transform the results from each component to a standardized scale. Consult with BMRS prior to transferring results to a standardized scale, if you are unfamiliar with this conversion.

Sec. 204.050 Computing Civil Service Scores

To convert numeric raw scores to civil service scores, it is necessary to establish a passing point for the assessment. (If you have multiple components, see section 204.040, Combining Assessment Components, of this handbook chapter, and consult with BMRS or your agency approval authority.) Generally, for such assessments as T&E's, resume screens (utilizing a 9-point or 3-point scale), and oral evaluations, the passing point should be set at 4 on a 9-point scale and 2 on a 3-point scale. Any deviation from this practice should be approved by BMRS or your agency approval authority.

1. **Procedure for calculating the reciprocal for a Resume Screen:**

Example: When administering a Resume Screen with a 9-point scale, the maximum score is 9. The passing point is set at 4.

- a. Subtract the raw score passing point from the maximum score possible on the assessment.

$$9 - 4 = 5$$

- b. Divide the number 30 (the difference between 100 – 70) by the result of the subtraction in (a), above. This result is the reciprocal and will be used in the actual computation of a civil service score.

$$30 \text{ divided by } 5 = 6 \text{ or the reciprocal (R)}$$

2. **Procedure for converting raw scores to civil service scores:**

Two examples are provided in this section, detailing 1) the conversion of a raw score to a civil service score: a raw score of 3 (*below* the passing point) and 2) the conversion of a raw score *above* the passing point:

$$\text{Civil service score} = R (\text{raw score} - \text{passing point}) + 70$$

- a. Subtract the raw score passing point from the individual's total raw score.

Recall that 4 is the passing point.

$$\begin{array}{l} 1) \quad 3 - 4 = -1 \\ 2) \quad 6 - 4 = 2 \end{array}$$

- b. Multiply this result by the reciprocal, or R. Recall that R is 6.

$$\begin{array}{l} 1) \quad 6 \times (-1) = -6 \\ 2) \quad 6 \times (2) = 12 \end{array}$$

- c. Add the result of this multiplication to 70.

$$\begin{array}{l} 1) \quad -6 + 70 = 64^* \\ 2) \quad 12 + 70 = 82 \end{array}$$

*In the case of a failing score, you are in reality *subtracting* the result of step (b) from 70.

- d. The result of step (c) is the civil service score, which is not to be confused with a percent score.

$$\begin{array}{l} 1) \quad 64 \text{ CSS} \\ 2) \quad 82 \text{ CSS} \end{array}$$

Sec. 204.060 Establishing the Register

1. Complete the *Assessment Score Analysis* form (DOA-15514, located on the [DOA/DPM](#) web site or the Assessment Score Analysis Spreadsheet (located on the *Wisc.Jobs* Help Desk) to document the steps taken to set the passing point and establish the register. (See [Chapter 202](#)—Statistical and Reliability Analysis of the *Wisconsin Human Resources Handbook* for information regarding determining the passing point and completing the form.)
2. Establish the register in *Wisc.Jobs* or the system deemed appropriate. (See the *Wisc.Jobs Training Guide* for detailed instructions on creating a register within that system.) *Wisc.Jobs* will assign final grade ranks accordingly.

Sec. 204.070 Final Grade Rank

When a ranked register is established, all eligible applicants should be ranked according to their final numerical grade, when applicable. The highest grade is ranked number one. No rank is given for applicants who are not eligible. In addition, for registers established without numerical scores, eligible applicants will be assigned a rank at random. If such a register is integrated, the rank of the eligible applicants may change as a result of the random assignment. Ranking for non-scored registers is not significant and has no bearing on subsequent steps of the selection process.

Sec. 204.080 Eligibility

All applicants must be notified of their eligibility. This can be done by written notice, public posting, or any other means deemed appropriate by the director. When establishing the register in *Wisc.Jobs*, notices of eligibility can be generated and published directly to the applicant's job cart.

Sec. 204.190 Register Maintenance and Extension

Registers are active for a period of three to twelve months from the date they are established. The decision to extend or reactivate a register is based on consideration of factors such as the number of candidates remaining on the register, the potential for attracting new applicants of equal or greater qualifications, and the state's interest in the efficient and timely staffing of positions. A register may be reactivated for up to 1 year and an appointing authority may request an additional extension provided the total time does not exceed 3 years, as provided by s. ER-MRS 11.03(2), Wis. Adm. Code.

Sec. 204.110 Related Registers

If a register exists for the same classification and geographical area for an agency and it was created in the last 30 days, the agency that initially created the register is required to use it to certify applicants to fill a vacancy. If there is a business reason that would require the creation of a new register when one exists that is less than 30 days old, justification must be documented in the recruitment folder. Agencies may approve their own justification. Agencies may also establish policies that would require the use of certain registers for a longer period of time (i.e. for large recruitments that are run on a regularly scheduled basis).

To expedite the hiring process, agencies may choose to use a related register. The Administrative Code (ER-MRS 12.04) permits the use of a related register for positions where the competitive procedure that was used to create the register is job-related to the vacant position.

Agencies will approve their own agency-held registers as related registers for the same classification or within the same classification series using the general principles outlined on the *Request to Use Related Register* form [DOA-15516](#)). Agencies may complete the form or document the factors outlined on the form in a memo.

Any agencies wishing to use a related register created by another agency or created for a different classification or series, must submit a request to BMRS. The request must include the *Request to Use Related Register* form ([DOA-15516](#)), and supporting documentation. .

Sec. 204.120 Removals

1. An appointing authority may request to remove an applicant from a register for sound human resources management reasons. The Administrative Code specifies two categories of removals: (1) disqualification or “for cause” removals and (2) administrative removals. A removal request must be submitted to BMRS for disqualification and some administrative removals. Administrative removals under s. ER-MRS 11.04(a), (c) and (h), Wis. Adm. Code, are automatically handled in Wisc.Jobs.
 - a. Removal for Cause - Section ER-MRS 6.10, Wis. Adm. Code, lists reasons for the BMRS Director to refuse to certify an applicant or to remove an applicant from a certification. These reasons include failure to meet the position’s preliminary requirements, falsifying application materials, gaining access to special or secret information regarding the content of the competitive procedure or subsequent selection steps, etc.
 - b. Administrative Removals - Section ER-MRS 11.04, Wis. Adm. Code, specifies reasons to remove a name from a register or refuse to certify an applicant. Generally, when an applicant is removed for any of these reasons, they are removed from the register, not just from one certification. In some instances, the removal is automatic, such as when an applicant is appointed to a position. In other cases, an appointing authority must justify the removal, e.g., by entering a report of action in Wisc.Jobs indicating that the applicant failed to respond to a request to interview after being given at least 2 work days to respond after invitation.
2. For removals that are not automatically processed in Wisc.Jobs (see section 3 below) a request must be submitted to BMRS and must include the following information:
 - a. The applicant’s full name, appropriate job classification, register number, and certification number, if applicable.
 - b. The specific provision of the Administrative Code on which the removal request is based, either ER-MRS 6.10 or 11.04, or sometimes both.
 - c. The specific reasons for the removal and any documents supporting the request.

If the request is approved, BMRS will notify the applicant of the removal action, unless otherwise coordinated with the requesting agency. Requests to restore an applicant’s name should also be sent to BMRS.

3. Some register removals happen through the Wisc.Jobs system based on the ROA entered for the applicant on the certification created from the register.
 - a. NA (Not Available), NC (Not Contacted), NE (Not Eligible), NS (Not Selected) — Does not change the status of a registrant on the register, and they will continue to be eligible to be certified if the “On Register Date” is within the “Registrant Eligibility Period” set on the register. If the register does not have an expiration date, the registrant will remain active until the batch job runs (the first Sunday of every month) and the “On Register Date” is greater than 3 years, or the certified registrant accumulates one or more ROAs which would change their status on the register to a status which prevents future certifications, i.e. “SE” (Selected) or “I” (Inactive).
 - b. SE (Selected) – Changes registrant status to “SE” on the register which is a status that prevents the registrant from being certified on future certifications.

- c. NI (Not Interested), FR (Failed to Respond), DO (Declined Offer) – If a registrant receives 3 or more DO, FR, and/or NI ROAs a daily batch job will change the registrant status to “3” (Active but has accumulated 3 or more DO, FR, NI).

If a suspension letter is generated, the generation date is more than 21 days prior to the current date for the registrant, and the registrant status is not changed manually, or one or more of the ROAs is not manually changed to an ROA other than DO, FR, or NI before the next batch job, the registrant status will be changed to “X” which prevents the registrant from being certified on future certifications.

If at least one of the certified registrants ROAs is changed to an ROA other than DO, FR, or NI, the batch job will change the registrant status on the register to “Active” because the registrant no longer has 3 or more eliminating ROA (DO, FR, NI). The registrant will remain eligible for certification until the batch job is run.

If a suspension letter is not generated for the registrant, the registrant will remain eligible to be certified if the “On Register Date” is within the “Registrant Eligibility Period” set on the register.

If the register does not have an expiration date, the registrant will remain eligible to be certified until the batch job runs and the “On Register Date” exceeds 3 years or all applicants have an ROA of SE or I (Inactive).

If the register is set to “Auto Suspend=Yes”, the status of a registrant with a status of “3” (Active but has accumulated 3 or more DO, FR, NI) will be changed to “X” when the batch job runs, preventing the registrant from being certified on future certifications.

If the register is set to “Auto Suspend=No”, the status of a registrant with a status of “3” (Active but has accumulated 3 or more DO, FR, NI) will not be changed until another rule applies, changing the status.

- d. FS – Failed to Show – changes the registrant status to “Inactive” on the register after the batch job runs. If this ROA is changed to another ROA after the registrant status has been changed to “Inactive” the batch job will change it to whatever rule applies to the new ROA, as long as the registrant has not gone past the “Registrant Eligibility Period” and the register is still active.

Note: When a ROA of FS is entered, the certified applicant must be notified that they will be inactivated from a register. (See Chapter 212 – Certification Procedures, of the *Wisconsin Human Resources Handbook* for a sample failed to show removal letter.)

- e. UL – Unable to Locate – changes the registrant status to “U” on the register when the daily batch job runs. If this ROA is changed to another ROA after the registrant status has been changed to “U”, the batch job will change it to whatever rule applies to the new ROA if the registrant is within the “Registrant Eligibility Period” and the register is still “Active”.
- f. PSE – Project Hire – Does not change the status of a registrant on a register. Because the certified registrant was hired into a project position, the registrant will remain eligible to be certified from the register until another rule applies, changing the status.

Note: An applicant may be re-activated on a register if the register and applicant’s eligibility are still current. The applicant must request this in writing, by e-mail or by telephone. In situations where the request is by telephone, verify the applicant’s social security number or birth date and mother’s maiden name or another name/word that will serve as an additional identifier to make the applicant record unique.

Sec. 204.130 Records Retention

Follow the [General Records Schedule: Human Resources and Related Records](#) for retention and management of records generated by the staffing process. (Registers must be kept in the Recruitment folder. The folder may also include agency requests and BMRS responses to use related registers. Agencies are not required to maintain documentation of notices of eligibility. This information is available in the applicant's Wisc.Jobs Job Cart.

The hiring agency is responsible for maintaining all the records as well as copies of any relevant documents created as part of the selection process, including those created by BMRS. Note: DOA/DPM serves as the custodian of certain records created during the staffing of professional-level human resources positions for agencies. (see Chapter 176 – Competitive Selection Procedures and Chapter 104 – Procedures for Staffing Permanent Positions, of the *Wisconsin Human Resources Handbook* for more information on required documents for Recruitment Folders.)

Sec. 204.140 Delegation

An agency may be delegated the authority to determine applicant eligibility and establish a register. (See *Wisconsin Human Resources Handbook* [Chapter 248](#)—Delegation-Staffing, for information on how to request delegation, the potential scope of delegation, and related information.)

Sec. 204.150 Administrative Information

This chapter was originally issued in May 2002.

It was revised in August 2002 because the areas of employment were changed from geographic sections of the state to counties. The Administrative Information section was added at that time.

It was revised in January 2003 to reflect the conversion from the Shared Human Resource System (SHRS) to Wisc.Jobs and the revision of the *Veterans Preference Supplement*.

The chapter was revised in June 2003 to include the policy which allows an applicant to request, via telephone, to be placed back on a register.

In March 2005, the chapter was updated to change the *Staffing Plan Summary & Approval* form to the *Exam Score Analysis* form. The chapter also was updated to remove the reference to MRS-149 on register extensions and reactivations. Policy Bulletin MRS-149, dated January 21, 1994, is now obsolete. Lastly, references to *Wisconsin Human Resources Handbook* chapter 248: Delegation – Staffing were removed because the chapter is not published yet.

The chapter was revised in August 2005 to include a section (204.120) on Related Registers. Information from Policy Bulletin MRS-199, dated June 24, 1999, was incorporated into the chapter and the policy bulletin is now obsolete. As a result of adding the Related Register section, three additional Statutory and Rule Authority definitions were added (204.020(4), (8), and (9)). Further, the *Request to Use Related Register* form (OSER-MRS-194) was updated.

In October 2006, section 204.110 of this chapter was updated to delegate the ability for all agencies to reactivate or extend registers created by their agency. In addition, agencies are no longer required to complete the Request to Extend or Reactivate a Register form (OSER-MRS-136). This form is now obsolete.

In June 2009, sections 204.100 and 204.140 were updated to include details of exam results notices and the related recordkeeping guidance. With these additions, Policy Bulletin OSER 0193-MRS (June 20, 2008) is now obsolete and may be discarded. Section 204.150 was updated to include a reference to *Wisconsin Human Resources Handbook* Chapter 248—Staffing – Delegation.

The list of Wisconsin county codes and the state map in Attachment #1 were changed in July 2010 to coincide with the coding system used by the State's central payroll office.

In October 2014, the phrase "or another name/word that will serve as an additional identifier to make the applicant record unique" was added as an identifier in section 204.130.

In August 2018, Chapter 204 underwent a review and update pursuant to changes introduced by 2015 Wisconsin Act 55 and by 2015 Wisconsin Act 150 and Administrative Rules changes to ER-MRS 6 & 11 as well . In July 2015, the Office of State Employment Relations was eliminated and the functions were transferred into the newly created Department of Administration, Division of Personnel Management. This chapter was updated to reflect the changes in terminology that resulted from the organizational restructuring. This chapter was also updated to address changes in procedural guidance and provide policy clarification. The Sample Suspension Letter was removed as this letter is created by Wisc.Jobs. Major modifications include the removal of the veteran's preference section and the addition of an explanation of the removal process for administrative removals.