

General application information

How to apply

Candidates for positions covered under the Merit System are encouraged to apply via our [Online Application Center](#). If you apply using the online process, all Merit System correspondence will be sent to you via e-mail. You must have a valid e-mail address to apply online.

Although county agency hiring authorities prefer that applicants apply online, you may file a paper copy if you do not have regular access to a computer. [Application forms may be obtained online](#) if you have Acrobat Reader installed on the computer you are using now. The Merit System application form may be obtained from the county to which you are applying, a local office of the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development or directly from the Merit System. Paper applications should be submitted to the Merit System at P.O. Box 64997, St. Paul, MN 55164-0997.

Read the position summaries thoroughly so you understand the duties, minimum qualifications and examination procedures for the position you desire.

Complete a separate application for each examination. Be specific and complete in describing your experience for jobs (for jobs with an experience and training rating, this part of the application will determine your score). List each promotion separately, even if it was within the same agency. We will not look at your prior application. If you do not list all of your qualifying education or experience, we will assume you do not have it. The minimum experience requirements listed are for full-time work. Partial credit will be assigned when work experience listed on the application is less than full time. Remember to fill out the application completely.

Examination procedures

The examination procedure may include one or more of the following examinations:

Written examination: The content areas of the test are given in the exam or vacancy posting. Generally, these are multiple-choice examinations. Exams are given periodically throughout the state. Once your application for the exam has been accepted, you will receive an e-mail from our office which includes instructions as to how to reserve your seat at the next exam opportunity in your area. However, during special recruitments, you may be contacted to test in the county with the vacancy, regardless of where you live. In St. Paul, written tests are given on weekdays during regular working hours. Outstate location tests are offered either on Saturdays or weekdays, depending on the exam location. At its discretion, county agencies may administer a typing performance test when filling clerical positions. Calculators are permitted, but they must be noiseless and must not require an electrical outlet.

Rating of education and experience: The examination will consist of a rating of *training and experience* based on the information you provide in your application and on your resume. Frequently, there will be a supplemental questionnaire that you will be asked to complete as part of the application process and your responses to the supplemental questions will determine your score. You must read the questions carefully answer truthfully and include any experience claimed in your answers to the supplemental questions in the "Work Experience" section of your application. Any experience claimed in your answers to the supplemental questions, but not included in the "Work Experience" section of your application *will not* be credited.

Examination scoring

You must achieve a score of at least 70 in each part of the examination in order to be placed on the eligible register. Applicants may apply to retake a written examination at any time. However, no examination may be retaken within 60 days, and no exam can be taken more than three times in a calendar year. Certain examinations, not open on a continuous basis, may only be taken once. If you do retest, your most recent score will be used and your previous score invalidated.

Referral procedures

The names of applicants who successfully complete all required examinations are placed on a register of eligibles in order of score. Passing scores for all examinations range from 70 to 100. As vacancies occur in a specific agency, the candidates with the top 15 scores, plus any names of candidates who are within three points of the top score, and available for the geographic area and employment conditions of the vacancy are referred for consideration. The agency with the vacancy may contact any or all of these individuals. Personal interviews are usually used by agencies for further determination of an applicant's qualifications.

Salaries

The salaries listed for the positions will vary by county. Counties operating under the terms and conditions of a union contract may have salary ranges that differ from those listed on the Merit System's general exam announcement

Apply online

[Apply online](#)

Print the Merit System Application

[Print Application using Acrobat Reader®](#)

[Information related to Social Work Licensing Exam Score Transfer Option](#)

Additional questions about Merit System?

email dhs.merit.system@state.mn.us