

POLICY GUIDE

Policy 2.10 – Hiring Veteran’s Preference

The Code of Virginia requires that state agencies shall give preference in the hiring process to veterans. The Governor’s Executive Order 1 (2006) permits appropriate employment preferences for veterans and specifically prohibits discrimination against veterans. If an agency uses a scored test by which to evaluate applicants, veterans must receive a credit of an additional 5% of his or her score or, if the applicant is a veteran having a service-connected disability rating fixed by the United States Veteran’s Administration, he or she must receive a credit of an additional 10% of his or her score. To be eligible for such an increase in score, the applicant must first achieve a passing score on the test or examination. However, because most state recruitments do not use scored tests, the challenge for agencies is to apply a preference that is equivalent to the 5% increase veterans receive on test scores (10% for veterans with a disability rating from the United States Veterans Administration). The following guidelines are designed to help agencies achieve this required level of preference.

Initial screening: Applicants are screened to identify those who meet the minimum requirements for the position – the equivalent of achieving a passing score on a test. No preference is given. Applicants must meet the required criteria at a minimum or better level on their own.

Preference applied after initial screening phase: After the initial screening, veteran status is noted for the candidates. The state application provides preliminary notice of veteran status; the agency may need to follow up to identify the exact status of veteran applicants. At this stage, preference shall be given by treating veteran status as a preferred qualification. Further preference shall be given if the veteran applicant also has a service-connected disability rating by treating the veteran’s disabled status as a second preferred qualification. Adding a preferred qualification criterion for veteran status and, if applicable, a second preferred criterion for disabled veteran status will therefore result in the veteran applicant and the disabled veteran applicant receiving the additional preference required by Code.

The additional credit for veteran, or disabled veteran status, remains with the applicant throughout the hiring process, and ultimately becomes a part of the hiring manager’s final decision. This process is comparable to how preference or credit is applied in situations where scored examinations are used. For example, applicants take a scored examination *one time*, and applicants who are veterans receive the additional points *one time*. Those points, like our credit for having a preferred qualification, remain with the applicants throughout the process.

NOTE: DHRM advises that job postings and/or advertisement not state veteran and disabled veteran as preferred qualifications unless required by law.