

## Tips for Completing a Civil Service Application

If you've ever filled out a civil service application, you probably thought of it as being like any other job application. It isn't. There is a whole section of Civil Service Law that the government entity must follow which includes applications. If the application isn't filled out correctly, it can cause your application to be disapproved. While you will be notified in writing of this disapproval and you have the opportunity to correct any issues, do you really want your job search held up by possibly a week while it gets sorted out? Finding and getting a job is time consuming enough. Don't be your own worst enemy.

Let's start simple. What is a Civil Service job? It is employment under a government agency whether local, state, or federal. Many of the jobs are called "competitive". This means that at some point you must take an exam to get or retain the job. Taking an exam for a job can seem like a scary and intimidating process, but don't let taking an exam scare you away.

Your first step in getting a Civil Service job shouldn't be filling out the application. It should be reading the job description. The job description will provide valuable information, particularly the minimum qualifications. Civil Service is very stringent with the minimum qualifications. For example, if a position requires a bachelor's degree and you don't have one, we are unable to consider your application. Minimum qualifications may also require some sort of work experience. Be prepared to show that experience in specific ways when filling out the application. The job description also tells you how the position is classified. If it says "competitive", you will be required to take an exam.

Did you know that the application is considered part of your exam? It is. So be thorough when filling out your application and answer all questions. You wouldn't leave blanks on your exam so never do it on your application. It could be the reason your application gets rejected. This is good advice when filling in any application. If a question truly does not apply to you, then write in "N/A" for not applicable. It shows the hiring manager that you read the information and are paying attention to the details.

Speaking of reading, read the application completely and carefully so you are supplying the right information. A Civil Service application may ask for additional information or documents, such as court documents or college transcripts, depending upon the information supplied. Again, don't hold up your opportunity by not following through.

Another rule that most people are not aware of is that when your application is reviewed, only the application itself can be taken into account. So while it's perfectly fine to include your resume and cover letter, we cannot accept an application that says "See Resume". We see this a lot under job duties. Here's a hint: when filling in the job duties on the application, focus on the experience that qualifies you for the job. Leave all the detail to your resume.

Pay attention to deadlines, especially exam deadlines which are absolute. If the deadline is 2/25/2023 at 4:30 PM, you can guarantee that no application will be accepted beyond that time. Take this into account when turning in an application. If the deadline is in two days, mailing it may not be your best option.

Lastly, be comprehensive and accurate with your contact information. Civil Service can and will use all forms of communication (mail, phone, email) to reach out to you. Give the

phone number and email you use most often. Keep the information up-to-date should you change addresses or get a new phone number. Watch the mail for communication; it's a deadline thing again. Check your email often. Answer your phone and be sure your voicemail is set up and working in case you can't answer. If you're handwriting your application, write clearly and neatly. This is good advice for your overall job search.

Civil Service applications aren't complicated, but require extra care. Don't consider any requests for additional information or documents as optional. If you are uncertain about anything, call and ask for clarification. We want you to succeed and following our tips is one of the best ways to land that Civil Service job.