

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Social Welfare and Development
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Quezon City
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MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR

No. 35
Series of 2003

SUBJECT : Department of Social Welfare and Development Merit Selection Plan

I. LEGAL BASIS

Pursuant to Civil Service **Memorandum Circular No. 3, series of 2001**, on the Revised Policies on Merit Promotion Plan, **Department Order No. 24, series of 1996**, known as the DSWD Merit Promotion Plan (MPP) is hereby amended and is hereby renamed as DSWD Merit Selection Plan (MSP).

II. OBJECTIVES

It is the policy of the Department to strictly adhere to the principles of merit, fitness and equality. The selection of employees shall be based on their relative qualifications and competence to perform the duties and responsibilities of the position. There shall be no discrimination in the selection of employees on account of gender (male, female, including those with sex preference), civil status, disability, religion, ethnicity, or political affiliation. In this pursuit, the Department's Merit Selection Plan aims to:

1. Establish a system that is characterized by strict observance of the merit, fitness, equality and transparency principles in the selection of employees for appointment to positions in the career and non-career service in all levels.
2. Create equal opportunities for employment to all qualified men and women to enter the government service and for career advancement in the Department.
3. Provide a guide for the speedy and fair adjudication of protest and grievance of employees relative to promotions.

III. SCOPE AND COVERAGE

This Merit Selection Plan shall cover career and non-career positions in the first, second, and third level positions in the Department including those in the Field Offices, Bureaus, Services and other operating units of the Department.

IV. DEFINITION OF TERMS AS USED IN THIS PLAN

1. **Assumption to Duty** – is the date the appointee assumed the duties of the position as certified by his/her immediate supervisor.
2. **Career Service** – positions in the civil service characterized by (1) entrance based on merit and fitness to be determined as far as practicable by competitive examination, or based on highly technical qualifications; (2) opportunity for advancement to higher career positions; and (3) security of tenure.
3. **Comparatively at Par** – predetermined reasonable difference or gap between point scores of candidates for appointment established by the Personnel Selection Board (PSB).
4. **Competence** – the ability to discharge the duties of the position, having the legal qualification or fitness.
5. **DSWD Office Premises** – shall refer to the Central Office for purposes of posting Central Office vacancies or the Field Offices for purposes of posting vacancies in field offices.
6. **Date of Issuance of Appointment** – shall refer to the date the appointment was signed by the appointing authority.
7. **Discrimination** – is a situation wherein a qualified applicant is not included in the selection line-up on account of but not limited to gender, civil status, pregnancy, disability, religion, ethnicity, or political affiliation.
8. **First Level Positions** – shall include clerical, trades and crafts, and custodial service which involve sub-professional work in a non-supervisory or supervisory capacity.
9. **Job Requirements** – requisites not limited to the qualification standards of the position, but may include skills, competencies, potential, work habit, and personality traits necessary for the successful performance of the duties required of the position.

10. **Next-in-Rank Position** – refers to a position which by reason of the hierarchical arrangement of positions in the agency or in the government is determined to be in the nearest degree of relationship to a higher position as contained in the agency's System of Ranking Positions (SRP).
11. **Non-Career Service** – positions expressly declared by law to be in the non-career service; or those whose entrance in the service is characterized by (1) entrance on bases other than those of the usual tests of merit and fitness utilized for the career service; and (2) tenure which is limited to the duration of a particular project for which purpose employment was made.
12. **Other non-career positions** - Secretaries and other officials of Cabinet rank who hold their positions at the pleasure of the President and their personal confidential staff(s); Contractual personnel or those whose employment in the government is in accordance with a special contract to undertake a specific work or job, requiring special or technical skills not available in the employing agency to be accomplished within a specific period, which in no case shall exceed one year, and performs or accomplishes the specific work or job, under his own responsibility with a minimum of direction and supervision from the hiring agency; and emergency and seasonal personnel.
13. **Personality Traits** – these includes presentability, self-expression, receptiveness, alertness and judgment and assertiveness of the individual which must have a bearing on the position to be filled.
14. **Policy Determining Positions** – these are positions that only the President may declare upon recommendation of the Civil Service Commission (CSC Memorandum Circular No. 11 s. 1977).
15. **Primarily Confidential Positions** - these include Private Secretary, Technical Assistant, Confidential Agent, Confidential Assistant; Confidential Aide, Personal Driver and such other positions as may be duly identified and located therein.
16. **Promotion** – is the advancement of an employee from one position to another with an increase in duties and responsibilities as authorized by law and usually accompanied by an increase in salary.
17. **Qualification Standards** – is a statement of the minimum qualifications for a position which shall include education, experience, training, civil service eligibility, and personality traits required in the performance of the job as approved by the Civil Service Commission and as determined by the PSB.

18. **Qualified Next-in-Rank** refers to an employee appointed on a permanent status to a position next-in-rank to the vacancy as reflected in the SRP approved by the head of agency and who meets the requirements for appointment to the next higher position.
19. **Regular Appointment** – is an appointment to a vacant itemized position based on the Personnel Services Itemization (PSI).
20. **Second Level Positions** – involve professional, technical and scientific work in a non-supervisory or supervisory capacity up to Division Chief level or its equivalent.
21. **Selection** – is the systematic method of determining the merit and fitness of a person on the basis of qualifications and ability to perform the duties and responsibilities of the position.
22. **Selection Line-Up** – is a listing of qualified and competent applicants for consideration to a vacancy which includes, but not limited to the comparative information of their education, experience, training, civil service eligibility, performance rating (if applicable), relevant work accomplishments, personality traits, potential, work habit and written examination.
23. **Substitute Appointment** – issued when the regular incumbent of a position is temporarily unable to perform the duties of his position, as when he is on approved leave of absence or is under suspension or is on scholarship grant or is on secondment. This is effective only until the return of the former incumbent.
24. **Superior Qualifications** – shall mean outstanding relevant work accomplishments, educational attainment and training appropriate for the position to be filled. It shall include demonstration of exceptional job mastery and proven ability to handle higher/complex responsibilities.
25. **System of Ranking Positions** – is the hierarchical arrangement of positions from highest to lowest, which shall be a guide in determining which position is next-in-rank, taking into consideration the following:
 - a. organizational structure;
 - b. salary grade allocation;
 - c. classification and functional relationship of positions; and
 - d. geographical location.

26. **Temporary Appointment** – issued to a person who meets all the requirements for the position to which he is being appointed except for the appropriate eligibility but only in the absence of a qualified eligible actually available, as certified to by the Civil Service Regional Director or Field Officer. The appointment shall not exceed twelve (12) months, reckoned from the date it was issued but the appointee may be replaced sooner if a qualified eligible who is willing to accept the appointment becomes actually available.
27. **Third Level Positions** – shall cover positions in the Career Executive Service.

V. BASIC POLICIES

1. Selection of employees for appointment shall be opened to all qualified men and women according to the principle of merit and fitness.
2. There shall be no discrimination provided candidates for appointment meet the minimum requirements for the position to be filled.
3. When position in the first, second or third level becomes vacant, applicants and candidates for the position who are competent, qualified and meet the eligibility requirement shall be considered for permanent appointment. In addition to the required qualifications, applicants for third level positions must possess executive and managerial competence.
4. Vacant position marked for filling up shall be published in accordance with Republic Act 7041 (Publication Law). Filling of vacant positions shall be made after ten (10) calendar days from date of publication.
5. The publication of a particular vacant position shall be valid until filled up but not to extend beyond six (6) months reckoned from the date the vacant position was published.
6. The following positions are exempt from the publication requirement but may also be published at the option of the management:
 - a. Primarily confidential positions
 - b. Positions which are policy determining
 - c. Highly technical positions
 - d. Other non-career positions
 - e. Third level positions (Career Executive Service); and
 - f. Positions to be filled by existing regular employees in the agency in case of reorganization.
7. A Personnel Selection Board (PSB) for first and second level positions, and for third level positions shall be established.

8. The Department shall, as far as practicable, ensure equal opportunity for men and women to be represented in the PSB for all levels.
9. The PSB members including alternate representatives shall undergo orientation and workshop on the selection/promotion process and CSC policies on appointments.
10. Candidates for appointment to 1st and 2nd level positions shall be screened by the PSB for 1st and 2nd level positions, while candidates for 3rd level positions shall be screened by PSB for third level positions.
11. Candidates for appointment to the following positions shall no longer be screened by the PSB:
 - a. Substitute appointment due to their short duration and emergency nature. However, should the position be filled by regular appointment, candidates for the position should be screened and passed upon by the PSB;
 - b. Appointment to entry laborer positions;
 - c. Appointment to personal and primarily confidential positions; and
 - d. Renewal of temporary appointment issued to the incumbent personnel.
12. For vacancies in the first and second levels, all qualified next-in-rank employees shall be automatically considered candidates for promotion to the next higher position. However, for reasons of equity and morale, and consistent with the Career Development and Management Plan of the Department, a qualified and deserving next-in-rank employee who belongs to the unit where the vacancy is who is capable of handling higher responsibilities as determined by the office / unit head, shall be given first priority for promotional opportunity. Likewise, in the absence of qualified next-in-rank employee from the unit, qualified employees in other units of the Department shall be given the next priority for promotional opportunity. All qualified next-in-rank employees need not apply and shall be automatically included in the selection line-up. The line-up of qualified candidates/employees shall be posted in DSWD premises for public information. A final line-up shall be prepared by the secretariat.
13. The PSB shall maintain fairness, impartiality and transparency in the assessment of candidates for appointment. Towards this end, the PSB may initiate innovative schemes in determining the best and most qualified candidate(s), i.e. conduct of psychological/aptitude tests or any other types of examination deemed appropriate.

14. The appointing authority may appoint an applicant who is not next-in-rank but possesses superior qualification and competence, and has undergone the selection process.
15. The comparative competence and qualification of candidates for appointment to first and second level positions shall be determined on the basis of :
 - a. Performance
 - b. Education and training
 - c. Experience and outstanding accomplishment/s, if any
 - d. Personality traits
 - e. Potential and work habit
 - f. Written/special exams or skills test
16. The PSB for third level positions may also establish its own criteria for selection based on the requirement of the position.
17. An employee may be promoted or transferred to a position which is not more than three (3) salary pay or job grades higher than the employee's present position except in very meritorious cases, such as: if the vacant position is next-in-rank as identified in the System of Ranking Positions (SRP) approved by the head of agency, entry position in the second level, or the lone or entrance position indicated in the agency staffing pattern.
18. An employee should have rendered at least very satisfactory service for the last rating period in the present position before being considered for promotion.
19. An employee who is on local or foreign scholarship or training grant or on maternity leave shall be considered for promotion. For this purpose, performance rating to be considered shall be the rating immediately prior to the scholarship or training grant or maternity leave. If promoted, the effectivity date of the promotional appointment shall be on the assumption to duty.
20. An appointment shall take effect immediately upon its issuance by the appointing authority and if the appointee assumes the duties of the position.
21. No employee shall be considered for promotion within six (6) months after his/her last appointment or promotion.
22. Promotion within six (6) months prior to compulsory retirement shall not be allowed except as otherwise provided by law.

23. A notice announcing the appointment of an employee shall be posted in two (2) conspicuous places in the DSWD office premises a day after the issuance of the appointment for at least fifteen (15) calendar days.

VI. PROCEDURE

1. The Personnel Division as the Secretariat of the PSB for first and second level positions shall :
 - a. Publish the vacant position and its qualification standards in the CSC Bulletin of Vacant Positions or through other modes of publication for at least ten (10) calendar days. The vacancies shall also be posted in conspicuous places in the DSWD office premises for at least ten (10) calendar days.
 - b. Prepare list of candidates aspiring for the vacant position, either from within or outside the Department, including qualified next-in-rank employees.
 - c. Conduct preliminary evaluation of the qualification of all candidates based on qualification standards and the specific requirements of the unit where the vacancy is, and prepare a selection line-up.
 - d. Notify all applicants and candidates of the outcome of the preliminary evaluation. Applicants who were disqualified in the preliminary evaluation shall be informed by the Secretariat, provided that the list of disqualified applicants shall still be presented to the PSB for confirmation. If on the basis of the Board's evaluation the disqualified applicant is found to be qualified, the said applicant shall be informed accordingly and be scheduled for deliberation/interview by the Board.
 - e. Post in two (2) conspicuous places in the DSWD office premises the selection line-up.
 - f. Notify applicants in the selection line-up three (3) days before the interview or examination by the PSB
 - g. Submit the selection line-up to the PSB for deliberation en banc.
 - h. Inform candidates of the result of the deliberation.

- i. Post a notice announcing the appointment of an employee in two (2) conspicuous places in the DSWD office premises within three (3) days after the issuance of the appointment for at least fifteen (15) days. The date of posting should be indicated in the notice.
2. The PSB for the first, second and third level shall :
 - a. Conduct the selection based on the competence and qualifications of candidates for appointment to the corresponding level of positions. Evaluate and deliberate en banc the qualifications of those listed in the selection line-up.
 - b. Submit the list of candidates, from highest to the lowest rank, indicating the Board's recommendation for the top ranking candidate within fifteen (15) days after deliberation, subject to the concurrence/approval of the appointing authority.
3. The appointing authority shall:

Assess the merits of the PSB's recommendation for appointment and either concur/approve it, or in the exercise of sound discretion, select, in so far as practicable, from among the top five ranking applicants deemed most qualified for appointment to the vacant position.
4. The Secretariat of the PSB for third level positions may also adopt the preceding procedure or may follow a procedure that may be established by the PSB for third level positions.

VII. GRIEVANCE

1. A qualified next-in-rank employee may present the grievance with the agency grievance machinery under the following conditions:
 - a. Non-compliance with the selection process;
 - b. Discrimination on account of but not limited to gender, civil status, disability, pregnancy, religion, ethnicity or political affiliation;
 - c. Disqualification of applicant to a career position for reason of lack of confidence of the appointing authority; and
 - d. Other violations of the provisions of this Merit Selection Plan, Civil Service Rules and Regulation and other relevant policies and guidelines.

VIII. COMPOSITION OF THE PERSONNEL SELECTION BOARD (PSB)

A. First and Second Level

1. Central Office

Chairperson: Assistant Secretary In-charge of Human Resource Management;

Members :

- a. Director, Human Resource Management and Development Service (HRMDS);
- b. Chief or the authorized representative from the career service of the organizational unit where the vacancy is;
- c. Human Resource Management Officer or official or employee directly responsible for personnel management;
- d. Two representative from the rank-and-file employees, and two alternates one from the first level and one from the second level, who shall both be chosen by the duly accredited employee association in the agency.

There shall be alternate PSB Chairperson and alternate PSB members to be designated by proper authorities.

2. Field Office

Chairperson : Assistant Regional Director

Members :

- a. Chief of the Management Division or staff responsible for personnel management;
- b. Head of the organizational unit where the vacancy is;
- c. Human Resource Management Officer III;
- d. Two (2) representatives from the rank and file employees and two (2) alternates, one from the first level and one from the second level, who shall be both chosen by the duly accredited/registered/recognized employee's association.

There shall be alternate PSB Chairperson and alternate members of the Field Office PSB in the Field Offices as designated by proper authorities.

In case there is no accredited/registered/recognized employees association in the Department or in any of its Field Offices, the representatives shall be chosen at large by the employees thereat through a general assembly or any other mode of selection to be conducted for the purpose. The candidate who garnered the second highest votes shall automatically be the alternate representative.

The first level representative shall participate during the screening of candidates for vacancies in the first level; the second level representative shall participate in the screening of candidates for vacancies in the second level. Both rank and file representatives shall serve for a period of two (2) years.

B. Third Level (Central and Field Offices)

Chairperson	:	Department Secretary
Members	:	Undersecretaries
Secretariat	:	Head Executive Assistant

IX. FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The Head of Personnel Division for Central Office and Personnel Unit for Field Office shall have the following functions and responsibilities:
 - a. Circulate copies of the agency Merit Selection Plan (MSP) and its annexes to all personnel after approval thereof by the Civil Service Commission. An orientation shall also be conducted by the Personnel Division/Unit in all units of the Department within six (6) months upon approval of the MSP. This orientation is meant to ensure awareness and understanding of the Plan. A report on the same shall be submitted to the Civil Service Regional/Field Office concerned for record purposes;
 - b. Develop a Department-wide System of Ranking Positions (SRP) submitted for approval of the appointing authority, copy furnished the Civil Service Commission and its Regional/Field Offices concerned, for reference purposes. (Central Office HRMO)
 - c. Develop and maintain an updated qualification database of employees of the agency to include education, training, experience, skills, competencies, and other similar information including those information from the employees Personal Data Sheet;

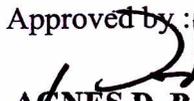
- d. Provide information as requested by the Career Planning and Development Division to fast track the career movement of employees.
2. The Personnel Selection Board for First and Second Level positions shall have the following functions and responsibilities:
 - a. Adopt a formal screening procedure and formulate criteria for the evaluation of candidates for appointment, taking into consideration the following:
 - a.1 Reasonable and valid standards and methods of evaluating the competence and qualifications of all applicants competing for a particular position.
 - a.2 Criteria for evaluation of qualifications of applicants for appointment must suit the job requirements of the position.
 - b. Disseminate screening procedure and criteria for selection to all agency officials and employees and interested applicants. As well as any modification of such that may be done later.
 - c. Evaluate and deliberate en banc the qualifications of those listed in the selection line-up;
 - d. Submit the list of candidates, from highest to the lowest rank, indicating the Board's recommendation for the top ranking candidate within fifteen (15) days after deliberation, subject to the concurrence/approval of the appointing authority.
 - e. Maintain records of the deliberations which must be made accessible to interested parties upon written request and for inspection and audit by the CSC;
 - f. Orient officials and employees in the Department pertaining to policies relative to personnel actions, including the gender and development dimensions of the Merit Selection Plan.
 - g. The PSB shall convene as often as it may be necessary and shall maintain a collegial interaction during the deliberations/discussion. Open exchange of views shall be encouraged at all times.
3. The PSB for Third Level Positions shall also establish its own screening procedure relevant to third level positions.

4. The appointing authority shall ensure the establishment of a well balanced composition of and impartial Personnel Selection Board and see to it that all its members undergo orientation and workshop on the selection/promotion process and CSC policies on appointments.
5. The employees shall be responsible for updating their Personal Data Sheet (PDS) annually, and submit supporting documents thereto to the Personnel Division/Unit.

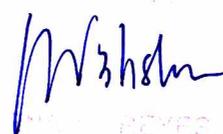
X. EFFECTIVITY

This Merit Selection Plan and subsequent amendments thereto shall take effect immediately upon approval of the Civil Service Commission. Once approved, this Plan supersedes any previous Order or Plan inconsistent with it.


 CORAZON JULIANO-SOLIMAN
 Secretary 

Approved by :

AGNES D. PADILLA
 Director IV
 CSC Regional Director
 CSC-NCR

Date: 5-25-04


 W. REYES
 Director
 CSC-NCR

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