



55-a Program Frequently Asked Questions

What is Civil Service and 55-a?

Most positions in New York City government require a competitive civil service exam. For these positions, applicants who have completed the exam are considered before those who have not completed it.

Section 55-a of the New York Civil Service Law allows qualified persons with disabilities to be interviewed and appointed to competitive civil service positions without having to take the exam. The 55-a Program is a diversity and inclusion program for employment within the City of New York. The program is designed to provide equal access for applicants to be considered for a City job. As a jobseeker, this is an opportunity to gain access to job openings that would have otherwise been filled through an existing civil service list.

How Can I Find Positions as a 55-a Eligible Candidate?

Any position open with the City of New York designated with a “Competitive” Title Classification can be open to a 55-a candidate, which are listed on www.nyc.gov/jobs. Positions at every level of experience can be classified as Competitive. Please note that the Department of Education and NYC’s Health and Hospitals Corporation list their openings on separate sites

NYC: ATWORK serves as the recruiter for many City agencies for both competitive and non-competitive positions. You can find many openings through our job board, www.nyc.gov/nycatworkjobs.

What is the Application Process? How Can NYC: ATWORK Help My Application Be Considered?

If you meet the education and experience requirements of a position and would like to apply, **NYC: ATWORK** can help your application get noticed, even when there are hundreds of other applications. Please notify your relationship manager of your interest before you apply. Upon review and approval of materials you will be directed to apply online. Once you have submitted your application online, **NYC: ATWORK** can follow-up directly with the agency to make a direct referral. Utilizing **NYC: ATWORK** can increase the likelihood of an interview. We do not guarantee interviews or placement; it is up to hiring manager to select qualified candidate(s)

What Happens After I Apply?

The agency will generally contact you directly if you are being considered for an interview. The agency will extend a conditional offer to candidates who successfully complete the interview process and are eligible for the 55-a Program. Once a conditional offer is made the eligibility process begins.

What is the Eligibility Process?

You cannot be verified for eligibility until you have received a conditional offer. There are 2 New York State agencies that certify individuals as having a physical or mental disability:

- Adult Career and Continuing Education Services – Vocational Rehabilitation (ACCES-VR)
- New York State Commission for the Blind (NYSCB)

Both ACCES-VR and NYSCB determine if an individual is qualified to perform the duties of the position sought.

Candidates must meet the following criteria to be certified for the 55-a Program:

1. Have certifying mental or physical disability
2. Be qualified to perform the duties of the position sought, with or without a reasonable accommodation
3. Meet the education and/or experience requirements for the position

This must be completed for each position an individual holds with the City of New York. An individual who has been certified for the 55-a Program and holds a position within the City of New York must be recertified for any new position they obtain through promotion or transfer.

The process to obtain a job through the 55-a Program can take roughly 2 to 3 months when done with the assistance of **NYC: ATWORK**.

What are Reasonable Accommodations? When and How Can I Request an Accommodation?

City agencies must provide reasonable accommodations to job applicants and employees based on several factors, including disability, unless it causes undue hardship for the agency. You can request a reasonable accommodation for:

- The interview: Consult with the hiring agency's EEO Office for assistance.
- At the workplace: Consult with the hiring agency's EEO Office for assistance.
- Taking an examination: Refer to the "Special Circumstances Guide" at www.nyc.gov/dcas. Please note that there is the deadline to request examination accommodations occurs before the filing deadline.

I have a 55-b/c Letter. Will That Qualify Me for a NYC Government Job?

A letter verifying your eligibility for 55-b/c is only for New York State positions. Your eligibility cannot be verified for 55-a until you have received a conditional job offer.

Do you have additional questions? Interested in learning more?

Please join us for a monthly 55-A/Civil Service Information Sessions! For dates and additional information, contact your relationship manager or email nycatwork@mopd.nyc.gov.