

WHAT IS THE 55-a EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM?

55-a refers to the section of New York State Civil Service Law which allows local governments to bypass the examination process when employing people with disabilities in entry-level civil service jobs.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR THE 55-a PROGRAM?

Eligibility is determined on a job-by-job basis. You may be eligible if:

- a) You are certified as having a mental or physical disability which is a substantial barrier to employment; and
- b) You are qualified to perform satisfactorily the duties of a particular job.

WHO DECIDES MY ELIGIBILITY?

- a) The New York State Office of Adult Career and Continuing Education Services Vocational Rehabilitation (ACCES-VR) or the Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped (CBVH) certifies your disability based on recent information which you provide or, if the information is insufficient, you may be required to undergo a medical examination paid for by ACCES-VR or CBVH, and determines you are qualified to perform satisfactorily the duties of the job.
- b) Civil Service determines if you meet the minimum educational and/or experience qualifications for a particular job.

HOW DO I CONTACT THE LOCAL ACCES-VR OFFICE?

The Albany ACCES-VR office is located at 80 Wolf Road, Suite 200, 2nd Floor, Albany, NY 12205 and be contacted at 518-457-4562. <http://www.acces.nysed.gov/vr/albany-district-office>

WHAT JOB OPPORTUNITIES ARE AVAILABLE?

Entry-level positions exist in technical, professional, administrative, and clerical areas.

HOW ARE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES LOCATED?

An eligible individual can contact Civil Service for assistance in identifying appropriate job titles. However, it is the individual's responsibility to locate a suitable opening.

ARE ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS GUARANTEED A JOB?

No. The program is voluntary and appointing authorities are not required to hire a 55-a eligible person. When an appointing authority is interested in hiring you, the job description will be reviewed by ACCES-VR or CBVH to assist you in determining your ability to perform the essential duties of the job.

SHOULD 55-a ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS TAKE CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATIONS?

Yes. The 55-a Employment Program is voluntary and some departments and local jurisdictions may not participate. To ensure that you do not miss any employment opportunities, you should take all examinations for which you qualify. Reasonable accommodations are provided for exam takers with disabilities to enable them to participate in the civil service examination process.

PROMOTIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR 55-a EMPLOYEES

Section 52 of New York State Civil Service Law permits 55-a employees to compete in promotional examinations for which they qualify.