



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

California State Office
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www.ca.blm.gov



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Instruction Memorandum No. CA-2002-058
Expires: 09/30/03

To: All Supervisors and Managers
From: State Director
Subject: Policy on Use of Panels for Filling Vacant Positions

The use of panels is an option available for the selecting official; one or more of the panel options may be used in combination for a single vacancy. It is extremely important that supervisors in BLM California be consistent in their use of panels to evaluate candidates for positions. If the selecting official decides to use any panel, the following policy must be adhered to:

Process

- ▶ The Human Resources (HR) staff will rate all applications for minimum qualifications before providing the applications to the panel.
- ▶ The HR staff will coordinate with the panel to ensure integrity and quality control throughout the process.
- ▶ All panel members will be given written instructions as to their responsibilities at the beginning of the session.

Rating and Ranking (Evaluation) Panel

- ▶ HR, in consultation with the selecting official and EEO, will determine who will serve on the panel.
- ▶ The panel will consist of a minimum of three members; at least one panel member must be a subject matter expert and be at an equivalent or higher grade than the full performance level of the position being filled. Effort should be made to ensure that the panel is comprised of diverse individuals.
- ▶ One member of the panel should be designated as an EEO representative, with responsibility to ensure that merit principles and nondiscriminatory provisions are adhered to. In lieu of designating an EEO representative, an EEO specialist can serve as an EEO advisor.
- ▶ The selecting official may not be a member of the panel.

It is the responsibility of the panel to determine the best-qualified candidates, based on the degree to which each candidate meets the quality ranking factors (KSAs) of the position.

Selection Recommendation Panel

It is the responsibility of this panel to refer a minimum of three names to the selecting official. Candidates eliminated during this panel process will not be referred or considered by the selecting official.

- ▶ A selecting official may elect to use this panel for the purpose of narrowing the list of candidates. It will be the responsibility of the selecting official to advise the panel on those competencies he/she feels are most important for successful performance in the position.
- ▶ The selecting official, in consultation with HR and EEO, will determine who will serve on the panel.
- ▶ The members of the panel must be at an equivalent or higher grade than the full performance level of the position being filled and should be familiar with the work of the position being filled. Effort should be made to ensure that the panel is comprised of diverse individuals.
- ▶ One member of the panel should be designated as an EEO representative, with responsibility to ensure that merit principles and nondiscriminatory provisions are adhered to. In lieu of designating an EEO representative, an EEO specialist can serve as an EEO advisor.
- ▶ All panel members must participate in each interview, either in person or by telephone.
- ▶ All documentation (notes) from the panel process will be maintained by the panel members and kept confidential.
- ▶ The selecting official may not serve on this panel.

Selection Panel

- ▶ The selecting official, in consultation with HR and EEO, will determine who will serve on the panel.
- ▶ It will be the responsibility of the selecting official to advise the panel on those competencies he/she feels are most important for successful performance in the position.
- ▶ The members of the panel must be at an equivalent or higher grade than the full performance level of the position being filled and should be familiar with the work of the position being filled. Effort should be made to ensure that the panel is comprised of diverse individuals.
- ▶ One member of the panel should be designated as an EEO representative, with responsibility to ensure that merit principles and nondiscriminatory provisions are adhered to. In lieu of designating an EEO representative, an EEO specialist can serve as an EEO advisor.
- ▶ All panel members must participate in each interview, either in person or by telephone.
- ▶ All documentation (notes) from the panel process will be maintained by the panel members and kept confidential.
- ▶ The selecting official will serve as the chair of this panel.

It is the responsibility of the panel to check references and to jointly select the best candidate for the position.

Additional Information for Law Enforcement Ranger Panels

- ▶ When ranking interview panels are used for Ranger positions at multiple locations, the panel will be comprised of supervisory subject matter experts at an equivalent or higher grade than the full performance level of the position being filled.
- ▶ The designated panel chair is responsible for coordinating with the Special-Agent-in-Charge (SAC) or the SAC's designee, in accordance with 9260 - Law Enforcement General Order 07.

General Requirements



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- ▶ If a panel member becomes aware that a personal friend or relative is a candidate for the position being filled, they must recuse themselves from participating on the panel.
- ▶ If the vacancy announcement stipulates that no additional information may be accepted from the applicant after the closing date, the panel **must not** accept any other material during the interview.
- ▶ No discussion of any tentative selection is to occur until the selecting official makes the official announcement.

This policy is in compliance with the BLM Merit Promotion Plan (MPP) dated January 17, 2001. If the MPP is revised, this policy will be reviewed to determine if any changes are necessary.

Questions concerning the above policy may be addressed to Federica Lee, Chief, Staffing and Classification Section, Human Resource Services at (916) 978-4468. Exceptions to this policy should be addressed to the Associate State Director.

Signed by:
Timothy J Burke
Acting State Director

Authenticated by:
Richard A. Erickson
Records Management