



Date: March 27, 2025
To: Civil Service Commission
From: Michelle Sutherland, Secretary/Chief Examiner

Background: Following the recent Sergeant Assessment Center promotional examination, a formal appeal was submitted by a group of participating candidates. The appeal outlined concerns with aspects of the oral assessment portion of the testing process, primarily citing transparency in scoring, an inability to review their scores due to the destruction of rating forms, and an inability to access feedback or to check for clerical errors. To address these concerns, the Civil Service Commission (CSC) approved a retesting of the oral assessment. At the same meeting, the CSC also approved the Police Sergeant eligibility list, presenting an inconsistency requiring CSC action to correct.

Summary: The main issue revolves around the principle of transparency and record keeping consistent with a standardized promotional testing framework and CSC rules. When the Commission approved retesting for a subset of four candidates who failed the initial oral exam, it, in essence, invalidated that portion of the exam for all applicants and nullified the finality of the entire original exam administration. Accordingly, the Sergeant promotional list should not have been certified, as it stood.

As the CSC Secretary/Examiner, I am requesting the CSC clarify its action from our prior meeting.

Recommendation: To correct the procedural inconsistency and preserve the integrity of the promotional process, we ask the CSC to rescind approval of the current Sergeant Eligibility List and approve readministering the oral assessment portion of the Sergeant promotional process to all seven candidates using Public Safety Testing services, with the method of examination (number of parts, relative weight, and minimum passing score) as announced in the Sergeant promotional examination to remain unchanged.

Once the new oral assessment test is complete the scores will be combined with the other examination parts and tabulated to produce a revised and ranked eligibility list, and the CSC will be asked for final certification of the updated list.

By taking this corrective step, the Commission upholds its obligation to fairness and accountability, but also ensures the process remains defensible, credible, and consistent with the core values of the City of Tumwater's Civil Service Rules.