

STATE OF ALASKA  
DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION  
DIVISION OF PERSONNEL AND LABOR RELATIONS

## STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

### I. APPLICATION EVALUATION - UNIQUE AND UNUSUAL CIRCUMSTANCES

#### A. Purpose

The purpose of this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is to provide guidelines for submitting and reviewing requests for approval to hire using 2 AAC 07.096 (b), unique and unusual circumstances. Unique and unusual circumstances for selection are appropriate when the appointing authority expects that some of the applicants who would meet the minimum qualifications for a class of positions would not be able to perform the duties of a specific position.

#### B. Scope

This SOP applies to all classified positions for which the appointing authority has identified a need to evaluate applications against a specified portion of the minimum qualifications for the class of positions.

#### C. Authority

2 AAC 07.096 (b) describes unique and unusual circumstances and the requirements for using this provision.

#### D. Requests

1. Selection of an applicant from an applicant pool using unique and unusual circumstances always requires the prior approval of the director of the Division of Personnel and Labor Relations.
2. The request and approval for unique and unusual circumstances must be made prior to the department recruiting for the position.
3. The appointing authority shall document the unique and unusual circumstances involved in the request. The documentation must be consistent with the Position Description (PD), the job class specification, and other factors relating to the principles of selection on the basis of merit from among the persons best qualified to perform the duties of the position.

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4. The request must be made in writing and must contain the information listed below (see Addendum A for suggested format):
  - a. The PCN and class title.
  - b. The reasons and circumstances which make specialized qualifications necessary.
  - c. The specific kinds of specialized education and/or experience and the number of months and/or years required. Objective/measurable criteria is needed when the specified portion of the minimum qualifications are identified and applied to the position as if they were the minimum qualifications for the job class.

The unique and unusual criteria are a narrowing of the kinds of experience and/or education considered qualifying, and not a requirement for additional years of experience and/or education. The selection criteria will be applied after the hiring authority has determined who meets the minimum qualifications for the class of positions.
  - d. An approval/disapproval block at the bottom of the memorandum for the director's signature.

E. Review

Requests for unique and unusual circumstances are reviewed by the Classification Section. Approval will be recommended if:

1. The position is sufficiently different from other positions within the same job class to warrant the use of "unique and unusual". These differences must be clearly documented in the PD.
2. The position is required to perform as a specialist, consultant or subject matter expert, or there is another job-related reason for requiring specialized qualifications.
3. There is a determination that many of the applicants for the class of positions would not be able to perform the duties of a specific position.

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4. The “specialization” or restrictive requirement cannot reasonably be learned during the probationary period.

Once the specific portion of the minimum qualifications has been identified and approved, the specific portion of the minimum qualifications must be applied to the position as if they were the minimum qualifications for the job class on all subsequent announcements of a vacancy in the position. The approval to use unique and unusual circumstances will remain in effect until the position is reclassified or approval is rescinded.

### F. Recruitment

Prior to posting a job request for a position with a unique and unusual approval, recruitment staff must verify approval is on record. The following statement is to be listed as the first paragraph in the special notice of the job posting:

“The applications for this position will be evaluated in accordance with Personnel Rule 2 AAC 07.096 (b) as this position requires job-related specialized qualifications. This position has been approved for unique and unusual circumstances by the Director of the Division of Personnel and Labor Relations and applicants who have (list the specific kind of specialized education and/or experience and the number of months or years required) will be given preference.”

### G. Hire Approval

The selected applicant must meet the approved unique and unusual qualifications.

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**ADDENDUM A**

TO: Director  
Division of Personnel and Labor Relations  
Department of Administration

DATE:

FROM: Department of \_\_\_\_\_

SUBJECT: Application Evaluation – Title  
Unique and Unusual Circumstances

The Department of \_\_\_\_\_ requests authority to hire using Personnel Rule 2 AAC 07.096 (b), unique and unusual circumstances, for PCN \_\_\_\_\_, (class title).

(State reasons for the request and circumstances which make specialized qualifications necessary. Explain why specialized training or experience beyond the minimum qualifications is required prior to entry on the job.)

Permission is requested to select from among those candidates in the applicant pool who meet the following criteria:

(List the specific kind of specialized education and/or experience and the number of months or years required.)

APPROVED

DISAPPROVED

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director  
Division of Personnel and Labor Relations

Date \_\_\_\_\_