

**RCW 41.12.050 Persons included—Restricted exemptions—  
Competitive examinations—Transfers, discharges, and reinstatements.**

(1) For police departments with fewer than six commissioned officers, including the police chief, the classified civil service and provisions of this chapter includes all full paid employees of the department of the city, town, or municipality.

(2) For police departments with six or more commissioned officers, including the police chief, the legislative body of a city, town, or municipality may exempt from civil service individuals appointed as police chief after July 1, 1987.

(a) If the police chief is not exempt, the classified civil service includes all full paid employees of the department of the city, town, or municipality, including the police chief.

(b) If the police chief is exempt, the classified civil service includes all full paid employees of the department of the city, town, or municipality, except the police chief and an additional number of positions, designated the unclassified service, determined as follows:

Department Personnel	Unclassified Position Appointments
6 through 10	2
11 through 20	3
21 through 50	4
51 through 100	5
101 through 250	6
251 through 500	8
501 and over	10

(3) The unclassified position appointments authorized by subsection (2)(b) of this section may only include selections from the following positions up to the limit of the number of positions authorized: Assistant chief, deputy chief, bureau commander, and administrative assistant or administrative secretary. The initial selection of specific positions to be in the unclassified service and exempt from civil service shall be made by the police chief, who shall notify the civil service commission of his or her selection. Subsequent changes in the designation of which positions are in the unclassified service may be made only with the concurrence of the police chief, the mayor or the city administrator, and the civil service commission, and then only after the civil service commission has heard the issue in an open meeting. If a position initially selected by the police chief to be in the unclassified service is in the classified civil service at the time of the selection, and if the position is occupied, the employee occupying the position has the right to return to the next highest position or a like position in the classified civil service.

(4) All appointments to and promotions in the department shall be made solely on merit, efficiency, and fitness except as provided in RCW 35.13.360 through 35.13.400, which shall be ascertained by open competitive examination and impartial investigation. No person in the unclassified service shall be reinstated in or transferred, suspended, or discharged from any such place, position, or employment contrary to the provisions of this chapter. [2002 c 143 s 1; 1993 c 189 s 1; 1987 c 339 s 2; 1937 c 13 s 4; RRS s 9558a-4.]

**Severability—Effective date—1987 c 339:** See notes following RCW 35.21.333.

*Chief of police or marshal—Eligibility requirements: RCW 35.21.333.*