RCW 41.04.010 Veterans' and uniformed service members' scoring criteria status in examinations. (1) In all competitive examinations, unless otherwise provided in this section, to determine the qualifications of applicants for public offices, positions, or employment, either the state, and all of its political subdivisions and all municipal corporations, or private companies or agencies contracted with by the state to give the competitive examinations shall give a scoring criteria status to all veterans as defined in RCW 41.04.007 and members of the uniformed services as defined in this section, by adding to the passing mark, grade or rating only, based upon a possible rating of one hundred points as perfect a percentage in accordance with the following:

(a) Ten percent to a veteran or member of the uniformed services who served during a period of war or in an armed conflict as defined in RCW 41.04.005 and does not receive military retirement. The percentage shall be added to the passing mark, grade, or rating of competitive examinations until the veteran's or uniformed service member's first appointment. The percentage shall not be utilized in promotional examinations;

(b) Five percent to a veteran or member of the uniformed services who did not serve during a period of war or in an armed conflict as defined in RCW 41.04.005 or is receiving military retirement. The percentage shall be added to the passing mark, grade, or rating of competitive examinations until the veteran's or uniformed service member's first appointment. The percentage shall not be utilized in promotional examinations;

(c) Five percent to a veteran or member of the uniformed services who was called to active military service from employment with the state or any of its political subdivisions or municipal corporations. The percentage shall be added to promotional examinations until the first promotion only;

(d) All veterans' scoring criteria may be claimed:

(i) Upon release from active military service with a qualifying discharge as defined in RCW 73.04.005;

(ii) Upon receipt of a United States department of defense discharge document DD form 214, NGB form 22, or their equivalent or successor discharge paperwork, that characterizes his or her discharge as a qualifying discharge as defined in RCW 73.04.005; or

(iii)(A) Upon receipt of a predischarge certification as defined in RCW 73.04.005, provided that:

(I) The predischarge certification was issued not more than 120 days prior to the date of submission; and

(II) The individual provides the official discharge documentation, such as a DD form 214, NGB form 22, or equivalent or successor discharge paperwork, that characterizes his or her discharge as a qualifying discharge as defined in RCW 73.04.005, within 30 days after the date of discharge.

(B) If official discharge documentation is not provided within 30 days of discharge, the employing agency shall notify the individual and afford a reasonable opportunity, a minimum of 15 days, to submit the required documentation.

(C) If official discharge documentation is not provided within that additional period, the agency may rescind any appointment or benefit granted based solely on the predischarge certification.

(D) The predischarge certification shall not be used to determine eligibility for preference beyond the date of discharge, including in

layoff or retention actions, unless and until official discharge paperwork is submitted.

(2) As used in this section, "member of the uniformed services" or "uniformed services member" means a person serving or who has served in the United States public health service commissioned corps or the national oceanic and atmospheric administration commissioned officer corps who received a qualifying discharge as defined in RCW 73.04.005 or is actively serving honorably. [2026 c 207 s 8; 2026 c 146 s 2; 2024 c 146 s 14; 2017 c 97 s 2; 2013 c 83 s 1; 2009 c 248 s 1; 2007 c 449 s 1; 2003 c 45 s 1; 2002 c 292 s 4; 2000 c 140 s 1; 1974 ex.s. c 170 s 1; 1969 ex.s. c 269 s 2; 1953 ex.s. c 9 s 1; 1949 c 134 s 1; 1947 c 119 s 1; 1945 c 189 s 1; Rem. Supp. 1949 s 9963-5.]

Reviser's note: This section was amended by 2026 c 146 s 2 and by 2026 c 207 s 8, each without reference to the other. Both amendments are incorporated in the publication of this section under RCW 1.12.025(2). For rule of construction, see RCW 1.12.025(1).

Findings—2026 c 207: "The legislature finds that service to our nation is a selfless sacrifice carried out by members of the armed forces, uniformed services, and their families.

Therefore, the legislature finds that members of the uniformed services should be afforded the same benefits and opportunities when choosing to continue public service employment in Washington state.

The legislature further recognizes the need to support employment opportunities for veterans, who served at any time in our nation's history and obtained a qualifying discharge, and spouses who support our current active duty force by allowing for hiring preference." [2026 c 207 s 1.]

Findings—Intent—2026 c 146: "The legislature finds that agencies may deny an applicant's request for veteran preference because the applicant is currently serving in the United States military and does not yet meet the definition of a veteran prior to the applicant's official discharge or release date from military service. The legislature further finds that some applicants are denied the preference despite receipt of an official statement of service memorandum from their commanding officer or delegated authority that includes expected discharge characterization and expected discharge or release from service date. The legislature recognizes the negative impact these actions have on active duty service members who are in the process of securing jobs prior to their separation date from service because service members generally do not receive a DD form 214 (military separation paperwork) until their last day of active service and most service members would prefer to have civilian jobs secured prior to their separation date. The legislature intends to clarify the requirements for veteran preference to ensure a smooth transition into civil employment." [2026 c 146 s 1.]

Intent—2024 c 146: See note following RCW 73.04.005.

Veterans and veterans' affairs: Title 73 RCW.