

## **Benton Soil & Water Conservation District Veterans' Preference Policy**

**Our Policy:** In accordance with Oregon law, military veterans who meet the minimum qualifications and any special qualifications for a position may be eligible for veterans' preference in public employment. Veterans' preference is applied whenever a competitive selection process is conducted including new hire, promotion, job rotation, and temporary hires. Candidate preference is applied at every stage in the selection process.

- Individuals may receive either 5 points as a qualified veteran (non-disabled) or 10 points as a qualified disabled veteran, but not both. If there is not a scored exam in a selection process, we will apply another method of preference as required for those who qualify.
- Veterans' preference will not be awarded without the appropriate documentation. See details, below.
- There is no limit to the number of times you can use veterans' preference. However, you must submit required documentation for each new competitive recruitment process in which you are claiming veterans' preference, even if you have submitted documentation before.
- For veterans' preference to apply, the District must receive military documents normally at the time of application but no later than at the time of the interview.

**To Apply:** Please submit the required documentation along with your application for the position (print form or electronically).

### **Veterans**

**To qualify as a veteran, you must have served on active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States (US):**

1. For more than 90 consecutive days beginning on or before January 31, 1955; or
2. For more than 178 consecutive days; or
3. For 178 days or less and have a disability rating from the US Department of Veterans Affairs; or
4. For at least one day in a combat zone; or
5. Received a combat or campaign ribbon or an expeditionary medal for service in the Armed Forces.

To qualify under #1-5 above you must have been discharged or released under honorable conditions; or

6. You are receiving a non-service-connected pension from the US Department of Veterans Affairs.

**You must provide proof of veteran eligibility by submitting:**

- A copy of your DD214/DD215 form (documentation must include character discharge to qualify under #1-5 above); or
- To qualify under #6, provide a letter from the US Department of Veterans Affairs indicating you receive a non-service-connected pension; or

- a certification indicating the applicant is expected to be discharged or released from active duty under honorable conditions not later than 120 days after the submission of the certification.

### **Disabled Veterans**

#### **To qualify as a disabled veteran, you must be:**

1. A person whose discharge or release from active duty was for a disability incurred or aggravated in the line of duty; or
2. Have a disability rating from the US Department of Veterans Affairs; or
3. Awarded the Purple Heart for wounds received in combat.

#### **You must provide proof of disabled veteran eligibility by submitting:**

- A copy of your DD214/DD215 form; and
- A copy of your veterans' disability preference letter from the Department of Veterans Affairs; or
- A copy of a letter from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs indicating the person is receiving service-connected compensation; or
- A certification indicating the applicant is expected to be medically separated from active duty under honorable conditions not later than 120 days after the submission of the certification.

### **Applying veterans' preference throughout the selection process**

- Veterans' preference is applied at each stage of the selection process, including but not limited to an interview.
- A stage in the process occurs when two or more applicants are compared, and one or more applicants are rejected for the position.
- Veterans' preference is applied on reference checks used as a tiebreaker or to distinguish between candidates. Veterans' preference does not apply when reference checks are conducted only on a top candidate to ensure suitability.
- The District may use a scored or unscored evaluation method.
- Scored evaluation method: The applicable percentage (5 or 10) is calculated based on the total score possible and added to the applicant's total points
- Unscored evaluation method: Veterans will advance one level and disabled veterans will advance two levels.
- The District may choose the number of levels or rankings and define them, such as:
  - (a) Sorting levels or piles (for example, "highly desirable," "substantially desirable," "moderately desirable," "possibly desirable," "not desirable")
  - (b) Ranking (comparing a candidate's skills and attributes to another candidate)
- The District may choose the evaluation criteria such as: (i) Strengths and weaknesses (ii) Competencies (skills and attributes), and (iii) Responses to interview questions.
- The District must define and document the evaluation methods and criteria.