

Limited Examination & Appointment Program (LEAP) Overview & Analysis

by

Eric L. Nelson, Ph.D.

The LEAP process was created in 1989 to create a special hiring pathway for persons with disabilities to land a job with the state. A current version of the LEAP manual is [available here](#). A collection of the ~80 laws cited in the manual are [available here](#).

- For the most part, only lower paying jobs are included in the LEAP program.
- Most higher paying jobs are not eligible for LEAP.

**In the 25 years of LEAP, 99 state organizations
have not used LEAP a single time**

The hall of shame includes:

- Health and Human Services Agency
- Fair Employment & Housing Commission
- Little Hoover Commission
- State Public Defender
- Cal EPA
- Department of Business Oversight
- Agricultural Labor Relations Board
- Exposition & State Fair
- Lands Commission

A CalHR list of all 99 state organizations can be [downloaded here](#).

**There are actually four LEAP hiring processes described in the
LEAP manual, not just the one that is used**

LEAP Hiring Method #1

This is the process used by some organizations, and encouraged by CalHR's LEAP program office. Rather than using the civil service hiring method, state organizations can select a LEAP candidate off of a LEAP list, which certifies they meet the minimum qualifications for a particular job. The LEAP candidate is put into a paid training and evaluation program performing the job while they are evaluated. If successful, the LEAP candidate is hired for the

position in a regular civil service capacity. This process is described in Chapters two (2) through five (5) of the LEAP manual.

LEAP Hiring Method #2

LEAP candidates can contact heads of state organizations to directly solicit a job (LEAP §2.2, and §2.7). LEAP candidates can send a resume, or a standard state job application (STD678), or make phone calls or send emails to these Directors and Agency Secretaries asking for a job.

A person with a disability told me this is how he obtained his state job. Years ago he sent his resume to the director of a state organization. He was offered an unpaid internship, and after a few weeks of proving himself, he was offered a job. He has now been employed by the state for many years.

LEAP Hiring Method #3

"Departments may use LEAP referral lists to fill vacancies" (LEAP §2.2). This can be done with a person on a LEAP list is a good "job-person match", conditional that they are sufficiently qualified (LEAP §2.2). Taken at face value, this says state organizations may find persons with disabilities on LEAP hiring lists, and if they are good match for an open job, hire them.

Attorneys at state organizations may dispute the apparent intention of this section, perhaps arguing such an appointment violates the rules of civil service. However, that argument is seen as unconvincing when one considers the fact that the entire LEAP process violates the rules of civil service. This is tacitly acknowledged in the opening sentence of the LEAP manual, where it says "LEAP is an alternative section program for persons with disabilities" (LEAP §1.1).

LEAP Hiring Method #4

Many jobs (called "classifications" in state speak) are not available to LEAP candidates. However, a state organization may ask CalHR for permission to use a LEAP process to hire someone into a non-LEAP position (LEAP Manual §1.5).

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