

How To Determine Who Is Minimally Qualified

To determine whether an applicant is qualified, agencies must confirm the applicant meets all the following:

1. Required Competencies & Proficiency Levels

Applicants must demonstrate the required proficiency level for every required competency identified in the qualification standard. While OPM establishes minimum proficiency levels for core competencies, agencies may adjust or add competencies to reflect mission-specific needs. If an applicant fails any required competency they may not be qualified. Agencies have discretion to supplement required competencies with additional general or technical competencies based on a documented job analysis.

2. Individual Occupational Requirements (IORs)

If the occupation has an IOR (e.g., specific skills, mandatory experience, licensure), the applicant must meet it.

3. Minimum Requirements and/or Experience

Applicants must meet any minimum requirements or specialized experience requirements still included in the standard. General requirements/experience may qualify in some occupations; specific requirements are still mandated where law applies.

4. Selective Factors (if applicable)

Selective factors are essential skills that cannot be learned quickly on the job (e.g., certification, language, specific technical skill). Applicants who do not meet a selective factor will not be qualified.

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5. Alternative Qualification Pathways (allowed)

Applicants may qualify through:

- Licenses/certifications
- Substantial experience or achievements
- Combination of experience and skills
- Provided the agency verifies qualifications through a holistic review.

6. Passing Skills-Based Assessments (where required)

Applicants must achieve the required passing threshold on assessments used to determine minimum qualifications.

Output:

- Qualified applicants = Those who meet all required competencies, proficiency levels, IORs, selective factors, minimum skills/experience, AND passing scores on required assessments.
- Not qualified = Applicant fails any required element listed above.