

## PERSONNEL COMMISSIONER

### **Definition:**

A Personnel Commission is a non-partisan public body responsible for the administration of a “merit system” for the selection, retention, and promotion of classified (non-teaching) employees in a public school district. By law, it is composed of three members appointed for three-year terms with the term of one member expiring each year; and an Alternate Commissioner, selected by the Personnel Commissioners for a two-year term. The State Superintendent of Public Instruction makes appointments of regular Commissioners to the Personnel Commission from independent recommendations provided by both the district governing board and the classified employee organization.

### **Distinguishing Characteristics:**

All Personnel Commissions have a threefold responsibility.

- (1) To cooperate with the Superintendent, governing board, and administrators in the quest for competent employees and a sound plan of human resources administration;
- (2) To represent the interests of the general public by providing a personnel system dedicated to hiring, retaining, and promoting competent workers in the service of the jurisdiction; and
- (3) To see that classified employees receive fair and equitable treatment.

This division of responsibilities sometimes places commissioners in the position of being mediators between the conflicting interests of employees, management and the general public. They must make equitable decisions — decisions which are fair and which contribute to the overall goal of a sound personnel program based on merit.

### **Examples of Duties and Responsibilities:**

Specific functions personnel commissioners in California have been charged with by the Education Code are:

- The classification of all positions in the classified service;
- Recommending salary schedules and rates of pay to the Superintendent;
- Hearing and deciding appeals in regard to disciplinary actions against classified employees;
- The adoption and revision of rules which shall provide for the procedures to be followed by the governing board as they pertain to the classified service regarding applications, examinations, eligibility, appointments, promotions, demotions, transfers, dismissals, resignations, layoffs, reemployment, vacations, leaves of absence, compensation within classification, job analysis and specifications, service rating, public advertisement of examinations, rejection of unfit applicants without competition, and any other matter necessary to carry out the provisions and purposes of the merit system;
- The Personnel Commission directs the work of the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources and Commission staff and insures that the provisions of the merit system are carried out.

**Requirements:**

To be eligible for appointment or reappointment to the Personnel Commission he/she:

- (a) Shall be a registered voter and resident within the boundaries of the school district or territorial jurisdiction of a county superintendent;
- (b) Shall be a known adherent to the principle of the merit system, which is the selection, retention and promotion of individuals upon the basis of merit and fitness;
- (c) Shall not be a member of a district governing board or county board of education;
- (d) Shall not be an employee of the county office of education;
- (e) Must have the time to actively engage in Personnel Commission activities, including attending meetings of Personnel Commissioners, and to attend workshops and conferences related to Personnel Commission functions and dealing with the merit system and responsibilities of the Personnel Commission.

**Desirable Qualifications:**

Volunteer or paid experience associated with work with community groups and organizations including public agencies; concern with the educational system in the school district or county office; familiarity with the merit system, its concepts and philosophy; ability to work with the administrators and employee organization groups and some knowledge of labor relations and recent legislative developments in this arena in the State of California.

**Frequency of Meetings:**

The Commission normally meets once a month on the fourth Monday of each month. Meetings usually begin at 3:00 p.m., with the duration from one to two hours. Occasionally, the Commission presides over a hearing for appeal of discipline or appeal of the hiring process. Such hearings are normally one to three days.

**Compensation:**

This is a volunteer position that receives no salary, but is paid a per meeting stipend of \$50.00, with a monthly maximum of \$100.00. Commissioners are also reimbursed for mileage to and from meetings and have access to group health benefits at their own expense.