

Republic of the Philippines  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
Quezon City

**TWENTIETH CONGRESS**  
First Regular Session

**HOUSE BILL NO. 3036**



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**Introduced by Representative Paolo Henry M. Marcoleta**

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**EXPLANATORY NOTE**

The Civil Service Act of 1959 or Republic Act (RA) No. 2260 was enacted to ensure that appointment in public service must be based only according to merit and fitness in order to provide a progressive system of personnel administration to insure the maintenance of an honest, efficient, progressive and courteous civil service in the Philippines.<sup>1</sup>

To uphold this principle, the Civil Service Commission (CSC) conducts the Career Service Exam (CSE), which is a biannual test to assess and identify those qualified to work in public service. Passing this exam means that one can apply for permanent jobs in the government and be entitled to a number of benefits such as competitive salaries, career growth, and insurance among many others. The CSE has two levels of tests: Sub-professional and Professional. The Sub-professional CSE are for high school graduates, or those who finished a course that is less than four years. Sub-professional civil service eligibility is required for jobs such as clerical, trades, crafts, and custodial work in public offices. While the professional CSE will qualify one to apply for first-level and second-level government positions like professional, scientific, managerial, technical, and higher posts of clerical jobs in public offices.<sup>2</sup>

Throughout the years, the CSE has consistently recorded a very low passing rate. For 2025, only 42,472 or 14.79% passed the professional level exam while 3,998 or 14.79% out of 31,727 passed the sub professional level exam.<sup>3</sup> For 2024, only 47,449 individuals (14.45%) out of the nearly 300,000

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<sup>1</sup> Republic Act No. 2260 (1959), sec. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Pancho Parian, Why Take the Civil Service Exam?, MANILA BULLETIN, February 14, 2023, available at <https://mb.com.ph/2023/2/14/why-take-the-civil-service-exam> (last accessed on July 07, 2025).

<sup>3</sup> Editorial: Another Indicator of Learning Crisis, PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER, May 18, 2025, available at <https://opinion.inquirer.net/183299/another-indicator-of-learning-crisis#> (last accessed on July 07, 2025).

takers for the professional level made it. This was lower than the 18.7% passing rate recorded by the CSC out of 345,194 takers in 2023. While for the subprofessional level, only 14.2% or 4,637 passers out of 32,707 examinees successfully passed. Even before the global COVID-19 pandemic, specifically between 2008 and 2019, the CSE passing rate hovered at only 9 to 13%.<sup>4</sup> These numbers show how difficult it is to pass the CSE, in fact, it is comparable to an extended college entrance exam or general education test covering a variety of subjects, including current events, grammar and communication, numerical ability, reading comprehension, and general information.

The dismal results of the CSE tend to greatly affect hopeful government employees, who have been in service for years, especially those employed under Contract-of-service (COS) or Job Order (JO). These people are the ones really doing the legwork on a daily basis, some even performing the functions of regular employees, yet lack the usual benefits and the chance for security of tenure because they repeatedly fail the required CSE.

It is worth noting that there are cases when the CSC grants civil service eligibility to certain individuals without the need of passing the CSE, namely:

- Bar/Board Eligibility (RA 1080)
- Barangay Health Worker Eligibility (RA 7883)
- Barangay Nutrition Scholar Eligibility (Presidential Decree [PD] No. 1569)
- Barangay Official Eligibility (RA 7160)
- Employees Appointed Under Provisional or Temporary Status Who Have Rendered a Total of Seven (7) Years of Efficient Service (RA 6850)
- Electronic Data Processing Specialist Eligibility (Civil Service Commission Resolution [CSC Res.] No. 90-083)
- Foreign School Honor Graduate Eligibility (CSC Res. 1302714)
- Honor Graduate Eligibility (PD 907)
- Sanggunian Member Eligibility (RA 10156)
- Scientific and Technological Specialist Eligibility (PD 997)
- Skills Eligibility - Category II (CSC Memorandum Circular [MC] No. 11, s. 1996, as amended)
- Veteran Preference Rating (Executive Order Nos. 132 and 790)

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<sup>4</sup>Kathleen de Villa, CSC: Civil Service Exam Passers Dip to 14 Percent, PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER, October 16, 2024, available at <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1992956/csc-civil-service-exam-passers-dip-to-14-percent#> (last accessed on July 07, 2025).

- Career Service Eligibility - Preference Rating (CSE-PR)<sup>5</sup>

Under CSC Res. 2301123, dated 07 December 2023, or the Grant of Career CSE-PR, special eligibility shall be granted to workers who have served for at least 10 years, have demonstrated valuable skills and very satisfactory performance ratings, but have failed to pass previous CSE beginning with the 03 March 2024 CSE and thereafter. It covers workers collectively called the JOCOSC6 working in the government service which includes: JO, COS, casual, contractual, coterminous, employees holding Category III and Category IV positions as enumerated in CSC MC No. 10 dated 16 April 2013, and career service employees with first-level eligibility.<sup>6</sup>

On 15 August 2024, the Department of Budget and Management called on all government agencies to absorb COS and JO workers and help them qualify for the vacant plantilla or permanent positions in their respective offices, citing 8% of plantilla positions in the national government as unfilled.<sup>7</sup>

This proposed measure seeks to support that effort by intending to formally grant special eligibility to qualified long service COS and JO workers. The bill aims to promote the welfare of these employees who have rendered great amount of time and valuable service for the government yet failed to pass the required CSE. It is our responsibility as legislators to provide hope to those who have already given so much to the government, give them the opportunity to secure regular work opportunities in the future, and to provide them with a path to stable, dignified employment.

In addition, this measure shall provide special eligibility to qualified COS and JO workers who have been working in the government for at least ten (10) years, either through third-party service contracting agreements or direct hire, and have obtained a very satisfactory rating in their performance review. This is to provide such hard working and dedicated employees the chance to apply for

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<sup>5</sup>Civil Service Commission, Special Eligibilities, May 24, 2021, available at [https://csc.gov.ph/special-eligibilities#:~:text=The%20career%20service%20examination%20is,Preference%20Rating%20\(CSE-PR\)](https://csc.gov.ph/special-eligibilities#:~:text=The%20career%20service%20examination%20is,Preference%20Rating%20(CSE-PR)) (last accessed on July 07, 2025).

<sup>6</sup> Ellalyn De Vera-Ruiz, CSC vows support for job order, contract of service gov't workers to obtain career service eligibility, MANILA BULLETIN, May 03, 2024, available at <https://mb.com.ph/2024/5/3/csc-vows-support-for-job-order-contract-of-service-gov-t-workers-to-obtain-career-service-eligibility> (last accessed on July 07, 2025).

<sup>7</sup>Darryl John Esguerra, DBM to Gov't Agencies: Absorb COS, JO Employees, PHILIPPINE NEWS AGENCY, April 15, 2024, available at <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1231235#:~:text=Among%20the%20strategies%20being%20considered%20is%20to,applying%20for%20permanent%20positions%20in%20the%20government> (last accessed on July 07, 2025).

competitive or classified service positions and accord to them the benefits that have been long deprived from them.

In view of the foregoing, the immediate approval of this measure is earnestly sought.

A handwritten signature in black ink, featuring a large, stylized capital 'P' that loops around the first part of the name, followed by 'H M' and 'MARCOLETA' in a cursive script.

**PAOLO HENRY M. MARCOLETA**  
Representative, SAGIP Party-List

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**AN ACT**  
**GRANTING SPECIAL CIVIL SERVICE ELIGIBILITIES TO**  
**QUALIFIED INDIVIDUALS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE**  
**SECTION 23 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 2260, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS**  
**THE CIVIL SERVICE ACT OF 1959**

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:*

1       **Section 1. Short Title.** – This Act shall be known as the “*Civil Service*  
2 *Special Eligibility Act*”.

3  
4       **Sec. 2.** Section 23 of Republic Act No. 2260 is hereby amended to read as  
5 follows:

6  
7       “**Sec. 23. Recruitment and Selection of Employees.** – Opportunity  
8 for government employment shall be open to all qualified citizens  
9 and positive efforts shall be exerted to attract the best qualified to enter  
10 the service.

11  
12       Employees shall be selected on the basis of their fitness to perform  
13 the duties and assume the responsibilities of the positions whether in  
14 the competitive or classified or in the non-competitive or unclassified  
15 service.

16       xxx

17

1 Qualification in an appropriate examination shall be required  
2 for appointment to positions in the competitive or classified service  
3 in accordance with the civil service rules except ~~[as otherwise~~  
4 ~~provided for in this Act]~~;  
5

6 1. THOSE PERSONS GRANTED CIVIL SERVICE  
7 ELIGIBILITY BY VIRTUE OF A SPECIAL LAW;  
8

9 2. THOSE PERSONS GRANTED CIVIL SERVICE  
10 ELIGIBILITY BY VIRTUE OF A PRESIDENTIAL  
11 DECREE OR EXECUTIVE ORDER; AND  
12

13 3. EMPLOYEES HIRED UNDER JOB ORDER, CONTRACT  
14 OF SERVICE, CASUAL, CONTRACTUAL,  
15 COTERMINOUS, EMPLOYEES HOLDING CATEGORY  
16 III AND CATEGORY IV POSITIONS, WHO HAVE  
17 RENDERED AT LEAST 10 YEARS IN GOVERNMENT  
18 SERVICE, TO INCLUDE THOSE HIRED UNDER THIRD-  
19 PARTY SERVICE CONTRACTING AGREEMENTS, AND  
20 OBTAINED AT LEAST A VERY SATISFACTORY  
21 PERFORMANCE RATING OR ITS EQUIVALENT  
22 DURING THE LAST TWO (2) RATING PERIOD.  
23

24 *Provided*, That whenever there is a civil service eligible  
25 available for appointment, no person who is not such an eligible shall  
26 be appointed even in a temporary capacity to any vacant position in  
27 the competitive or classified service in the government or in any  
28 government-owned or controlled corporation: ~~[Provided, further,~~  
29 ~~That non-eligible employees who, upon the approval of this Act,~~  
30 ~~have rendered five years or more of continues and satisfactory~~  
31 ~~service in classified positions and who meet the other~~  
32 ~~qualifications for appointments to their positions, shall, within one~~  
33 ~~year from the approval of this Act, be given qualifying~~  
34 ~~examinations in which their length of satisfactory service shall be~~  
35 ~~accorded preferred consideration: *Provided, further*, That those~~  
36 ~~who fail in those examinations as well as those who fail or refuse to~~

1 ~~take the examinations when offered shall be replaced by eligibles:]~~

2 And *provided, finally*, That for the period of ten years from the  
3 approval of this Act and in line with the policy of Congress to  
4 accelerate the integration of the cultural minorities, whenever the  
5 appointment of persons belonging to said cultural minorities is called  
6 for in the interest of the service as determined by the appointing  
7 authority, with the concurrence of the Commissioner of Civil Service,  
8 the examination requirements provided in this Act, [~~when not~~  
9 ~~practicable,~~] may be dispensed with in appointments within their  
10 respective provinces if such persons meet the educational and other  
11 qualifications required for the office or employment. For appointment  
12 to positions in the noncompetitive or unclassified service, qualification  
13 in an appropriate examination may be required if the appointing official  
14 so directs.”

15 xxx

16  
17 **Sec. 3. *Implementing Rules and Regulations.*** – Within ninety (90) days  
18 from the effectivity of this Act, the Civil Service Commission, in coordination  
19 with the Department of Budget and Management, shall promulgate the rules and  
20 regulations to effectively implement the provisions of this Act. Provided further,  
21 that affected employees shall not be subject to any form of discrimination,  
22 unwarranted suspension, termination, or any form of dismissal that will  
23 circumvent the purpose of this Act.

24  
25 **Sec. 4. *Separability Clause.*** – If any provision or part of this Act is declared  
26 invalid or unconstitutional, the remainder thereof not otherwise affected shall  
27 remain in full force and effect.

28  
29 **Sec. 5 *Repealing Clause.*** – All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders,  
30 letters of instructions, proclamations or administrative regulations that are  
31 inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed, amended, or  
32 modified accordingly.

33  
34 **Sec. 6. *Effectivity.*** – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days following  
35 its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation

36  
37 *Approved,*