

Fact Sheet
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Improvements In The Foreign Service Selection Process

The Department of State has inaugurated an improved process for selecting Foreign Service Officers. The four main elements of the new process are the Registration Package, which includes the Application Form and the Personal Narrative; the Foreign Service Officer Test; the Qualifications Evaluation Panel; and the Oral Assessment.

Application Form: Candidates begin the process by going online and filling out an application form that gathers basic personal data, including education and employment history.

Personal Narrative: The second part of the online registration is the Personal Narrative, in which candidates respond to six questions, each linked to one of the competencies necessary to perform Foreign Service work. The competencies are leadership skills, managerial skills, interpersonal skills, communications skills, intellectual skills, and substantive knowledge.

The Foreign Service Officer Test: After completing registration, candidates will be authorized to schedule a test appointment on a first-come, first-served basis according to when their registration package was received. The test will be computer-based and administered at proctored test sites across the country. The nature and difficulty of test questions remain unchanged from the pencil-and-paper test of past years, and the test still includes a written essay. The test will be given four times a year beginning this September, each time during a test window of eight days. For each test window the maximum number of test takers is 5000.

Qualifications Evaluation Panel: Files of candidates who pass the written exam, including the essay, will be considered by the Qualifications Evaluation Panel. The Panel will evaluate the information in the Application Form and candidate responses to the Personal Narrative questions, along with candidate test and essay scores, to determine which candidates to invite to the Oral Assessment.

Oral Assessment: The Oral Assessment will remain unchanged.

For further information and to register, go to the U.S. Department of State's employment website, careers.state.gov. For inquiries, contact Brenda Greenberg, Public Affairs Officer, 202-647-4282 or call the Office of Press

Relations, 202-647-2492.

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