

Large business organizations, public and private, have found it desirable to establish a central agency to handle certain kinds of employment matters. The reasons for this are obvious. In large organizations, the management cannot hope to maintain a close personal touch with the large number of employes on the payroll and must, therefore, set up certain administrative machinery to secure the degree of control over the personnel, policies and administration that is desired, and to bring to bear, through the central agency, scientific methods which have been developed for dealing with personnel problems.

With the enactment of the Merit System Law and by subsequent executive orders, Maryland has been given a rank among the highest of governmental jurisdictions of the country in the percentage of positions of the executive division of its government under the classified service. These embrace positions from the lowest paid employes in the institutions to the bureau and division chiefs of the various departments. Under the personnel program of Maryland, more has been done to aid the management of State institutions to secure and retain a high-grade working force than has been done in many other jurisdictions.

The testing processes used in selecting employes for entrance to and promotion in the service have been kept up to the highest standard by a careful study of the development of tests used both in the field of employment and in the educational field. During the last few years, no feature of personnel management, perhaps no governmental activity, has been subjected to so close a scrutiny, has been given a greater analysis, has made greater progress than has the technique of testing for employment. In this research work, many of the tests used by the Maryland Commission have been analyzed and made the basis of technical articles and experimental tests, and have been used by personnel agencies in both the public and private field throughout the country.

A scientific duties classification has been developed and is currently in use in the Maryland service. Positions having substantially similar duties are grouped together under a descriptive title, with a detailed statement of the duties and responsibilities of each position. This classification serves as a basis for the handling of many of the employment problems. In addition, it has brought about, to a considerable degree, an equalization of the salaries of those doing the same kind of work and, throughout the State service, the pay is now closely related to the duties performed and the responsibilities exercised.

Various other matters affecting the personnel of the service, such as transfers, leaves of absence, service ratings, disciplinary measures, layoffs, resignations, and removals, are handled centrally by the State Employment Commissioner, on a business basis similar to that obtaining in big business enterprises.

The cost of the operation of the State Employment Commissioner has, each year, been approximately one-half of one per cent. of the salary budget for the several departments and institutions of the executive division of the Maryland government. This is considered a nominal cost for the operation of a personnel system in which the recognized features of personnel management are handled, and from statistics available and in the judgment of those who are familiar with the operation of personnel programs, Maryland ranks among the first, both in effectiveness and in economy of operation.

The Merit System Law provides that the Commissioner shall classify positions in the classified service, pass upon the qualifications of applicants, and certify eligibles when vacancies are to be filled, recommend minimum and maximum salary ranges with intermediate salary rates for each class of position, pass upon transfers, promotions, reinstatement.