

The number of positions in the executive division of the Maryland State service under the jurisdiction of the Merit System Law when originally enacted and those that have been added by subsequent executive orders gives this State a high rank among governmental units in the ratio of the classified employees to the total number of employees. There is no provision in the Law for exempt, non-competitive, or labor groups of employees in the classified service in recognition of the fact that all positions which may properly be placed in the classified service may be handled on the competitive basis. The classified positions range from those held by the lowest paid employees in the institutions to those held by the bureau and division chiefs of the various departments.

The provisions of the Law regarding selection, regulation, and separation of employees acknowledge that a central technical agency is in a better position to deal with these features of a well-rounded personnel system than are the individual unrelated departments of government and that every department has personnel problems sufficiently alike to make their central control not only practical but also economical.

The Maryland Law provides for a one-man Commission instead of a multiple board which is recognition of the fact that promptness of action and of decision, so necessary in personnel matters, can be expected when the administrative authority is vested in one person under executive direction. While this type of organization is unusual in public personnel administration in the United States, it is the universal type in the provincial governments of Canada and in private organizations.

By Act of the General Assembly, Session of 1922, Part XVI, Chapter 29, there was established the Department of State Employment and Registration, to be composed of the State Employment Commissioner and the various examining and licensing boards of the State, with such additional boards as may hereafter be provided for, the head of this department to be the State Employment Commissioner, and to be known as the Commissioner of State Employment and Registration.

The chief duties devolving upon the Commissioner are the classifying and preparing of specifications for all positions in the classified service; the listing, by appropriate tests, of qualified eligibles for appointment to vacancies which occur or are created; the regulation of such personnel matters as, salary adjustments, transfers, promotions, reinstatements, leaves of absence, and lay-offs; the establishment of procedure to assure tenure of service to those doing meritorious service; and the providing of ways and means for the prompt removal from the service of those who have become indolent, incompetent, inefficient, or otherwise unfit to remain therein. The Commissioner is also required to check payrolls in advance of the payment of salaries to employees in the classified service and to certify to the legality of the appointment of such employees.

The cost of operation of the office of the State Employment Commissioner has, each year, been approximately one-half of one percent of the salary budget for the several departments and institutions of the executive division of the State 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 Eleventh Annual Report, giving in detail the activities of the Commissioner for the fiscal year ended September 30, 1931, has been issued and is available for distribution upon application to the office of the Commissioner.