

WAC 357-19-195 **If a permanent employee in a classified position accepts an appointment to an exempt position, what is the employee's right to return to a position in the classified service?** A permanent employee who accepts an appointment to an exempt position has the right to return to classified service at any time (~~as long as the employee was not~~). However, the right of return may not be exercised if the employee is terminated from an exempt position for gross misconduct or malfeasance, or during the pendency of an investigation if the employee has been given written notice that they are the subject of an active workplace investigation which may result in a finding of gross misconduct or malfeasance.

The employee's right is to a position in the highest class in which the employee previously held permanent status or to a position of similar nature and salary. The return right is to the most recent employer with which permanent status in the highest class was held. A position in the highest class does not necessarily mean return to the most recent employer.

If upon an employee being returned to a classified position there are fewer positions than there are employees entitled to such positions, the employer's layoff procedure applies.

For purposes of this section:

(1) "Written notice" includes notice sent by email to the employee's work email address; and

(2) "Pendency of an investigation" lasts until the employer has taken final appropriate action based on the finding of the investigation.

NEW SECTION

WAC 357-19-197 **What information must a receiving employer verify when a permanent employee exercises their right to return to classified service from an exempt appointment?** (1) When a permanent employee exercises their right to return to classified service from an exempt appointment in accordance with RCW 41.06.070, the receiving employer must verify:

(a) The employee is not the subject of an active pending workplace investigation of which the employee was given written notice, and which may result in a finding of gross misconduct or malfeasance; and

(b) The employee was not terminated from the exempt position for gross misconduct or malfeasance.

(2) For purposes of this section:

(a) "Written notice" includes notice sent by email to the employee's work email address; and

(b) "Pendency of an investigation" lasts until the employer has taken final appropriate action based on the finding of the investigation.

WAC 357-19-200 When must an employee apply to return to classified service from exempt service? Employees exercising return rights should provide as much advance notice as is practicable to the receiving employer. The employee must apply to return to classified service within (~~thirty~~) 30 calendar days of:

- Separation from employment in the exempt position, or
- Separation from employment in any subsequent exempt position if there is no break in state service of more than (~~thirty~~) 30 calendar days between initial and subsequent exempt appointments.

Employees who apply for return to classified service within (~~thirty~~) 30 calendar days must be returned to a position at the time of separation from the exempt appointment or the time of application, whichever is later.

The right of return may not be exercised if the employee is terminated from the exempt position for gross misconduct or malfeasance, or during the pendency of an investigation if the employee has been given written notice that they are the subject of an active workplace investigation which may result in a finding of gross misconduct or malfeasance.

For purposes of this section:

(1) "Written notice" includes notice sent by email to the employee's work email address; and

(2) "Pendency of an investigation" lasts until the employer has taken final appropriate action based on the finding of the investigation.