

Border Patrol Competency-Based Assessments for First-Line Supervisory Promotion

Overview

- The Border Patrol competency-based assessments for supervisory promotion measure critical job-related skills that have been shown to be essential for effective performance in supervisory positions. The components that candidates must complete to participate in the promotion process for GS-1896-13 First-line Supervisory Border Patrol positions are:
 - ◆ The *Border Patrol Career Experience Inventory (CEI)*, which candidates complete online in USAJOBS, is a task-based inventory that assesses the quantity and quality of specific experiences important for effective performance as a supervisor in the Border Patrol. **This assessment is required for all candidates.**
 - ◆ The *Critical Thinking Skills Exercise* in which candidates read real-world scenarios and evaluate conclusions based on information presented in the scenarios. **This assessment is required for all candidates.**
 - ◆ The *Managerial Writing Skills Exercise* in which candidates review and edit documents collected from the field to ensure that information is presented in a well-organized, clear, coherent, and grammatically correct manner. **This assessment is required for all candidates.**
 - ◆ The *Job Knowledge Assessment* in which candidates respond to questions about regulations, laws, procedures, and processes related to the requirements of a first-line supervisor in the Border Patrol. The assessment covers five content areas: (1) operations, (2) administrative/criminal prosecutions, (3) resources management, (4) personnel management, and (5) policy development and implementation.
- The goals of competency-based assessments are to:
 - ◆ Measure job-related competencies fairly and objectively
 - ◆ Identify top quality candidates for supervisory and managerial positions
 - ◆ Provide diagnostic feedback on training needs
 - ◆ The promotional assessment score is used as the evaluation method for GS-1896-13 first-line supervisory positions.

Frequently Asked Questions

Multiple-Choice Assessments

➤ **Can I sign up to take the multiple-choice assessments at this time?**

No. The spring Border Patrol promotional assessments open period is for submitting a CEI only. Multiple-choice testing is offered only in the fall assessment cycle each year, which includes both a CEI submission opportunity and the opportunity to take the multiple-choice assessments. The open period for the fall testing cycle begins in mid-July on USAJobs.

Career Experience Inventory (CEI)

➤ **I understand that the Border Patrol Career Experience Inventory (CEI) portion of the assessments has undergone some changes. I have a previous, scored CEI on file in my assessment record. Do I need to submit a new CEI at this time?**

If your most recent, scored Border Patrol CEI was submitted prior to August 2011, then you should submit a new CEI during this open period. The Border Patrol CEI was updated in the summer of 2011 to reflect the current experiential requirements of GS-1896 supervisors and managers. The update included the addition of several new questions and changes to some existing questions, including changes to the scoring key. All promotion candidates with Border Patrol CEI assessment scores prior to the summer of 2011 who did not submit the new CEI in the summer or fall of 2011 had their prior CEIs rescored on 31 December 2011, receiving no points on the new and changed questions, and their CEI and total scores decreased accordingly. Therefore, candidates who have yet to resubmit their Border Patrol CEI using the current form are strongly urged to do so at this time.

➤ **How do I submit a Border Patrol Career Experience Inventory (CEI)?**

You submit the Border Patrol CEI by completing the questions in the Border Patrol Agent Promotional Assessment Opportunity announcement and submitting your answers. The announcement can be found on USAJobs at: <http://www.usajobs.gov/>.

➤ **If I completed the Border Patrol CEI during the last open period, do I need to complete it again during this open period?**

No, you do not have to complete the Border Patrol CEI again if you completed it and received a total score combining the CEI and multiple-choice assessments. However, be aware that, per longstanding policy, if you completed the CEI but did not take the multiple-choice assessments, and had no previous multiple-choice assessments that were still valid to combine with your CEI at that time, then your responses to the Border Patrol CEI were not retained. Beginning in 2014 with the current open period, Border Patrol CEIs submitted henceforth will be retained and scored regardless of whether candidates have completed the assessment process by taking the multiple-choice components, so you may choose to submit

a CEI during this open period even though the multiple-choice assessments are not being offered. Candidates still will not receive a Total Score with which to compete for vacancies, though, until they complete all of the required assessment components (CEI and multiple-choice assessments).

- **If the last time I completed the Border Patrol CEI was prior to the last Border Patrol Promotional Assessment Opportunity open period (August--September 2013), do I need to complete it again in this open period?**

Not if you submitted it (and it was scored) during the August 2011 assessment opportunity or a subsequent assessment opportunity. HOWEVER, if your last scored CEI submission was prior to August 2011, then you should submit a new CEI during this open period. The Border Patrol CEI was updated in the summer of 2011 to reflect the current experiential requirements of GS-1896 supervisors and managers. The update included the addition of several new questions and changes to some existing questions, including changes to the scoring key. All promotion candidates with Border Patrol CEI assessment scores prior to the summer of 2011 who did not submit the new CEI in the summer or fall of 2011 had their prior CEIs rescored on 31 December 2011, receiving no points on the new and changed questions, and their CEI and total scores decreased accordingly. Therefore, candidates who have yet to resubmit their Border Patrol CEI using the current form are strongly urged to do so at this time.

- **If I have gained additional experience since last completing the Border Patrol CEI or if I made in error in completing the Border Patrol CEI during the last open period, can I complete the CEI again?**

Yes, if you have gained additional experiences or if you feel that you made an error the last time you completed the Border Patrol CEI, you can complete it again during this open period. If you complete the CEI questions again, you must answer all of the questions in the inventory. **Your new responses to the CEI questions will replace all of your previous responses, and you will receive a new Total Score when scores become effective on June 30.**

- **I understand that the multiple-choice assessments will not be offered for this assessment open period. Can I still complete the CEI even if I have no prior multiple-choice assessments on file?**

Yes. This marks a change of policy. Prior to this submission opportunity and per longstanding policy, CEIs were not retained for candidates who had no multiple-choice scores to complete their assessment record. However, beginning in 2014 with the current open period, Border Patrol CEIs submitted henceforth will be retained and scored regardless of whether candidates have completed the assessment process by taking the multiple-choice components. Candidates still will not receive a Total Score with which to compete for vacancies, though, until they complete all of the required assessment components (CEI and multiple-choice assessments).

Applying to Vacancy Announcements

➤ **What are the steps involved in applying for a vacancy?**

The majority of supervisory/managerial Border Patrol vacancies covered by the promotional assessments are posted in USAJobs as a long-term announcement. Instead of posting individual announcements as vacancies occur, a long-term announcement is posted to create a standing applicant inventory. **The scores from this announcement will become effective for vacancies that open on or after June 30, 2014; they will not be used for long-term vacancy announcements that opened prior to this date.**

There will also be a need for some individual vacancy announcements. You should apply for any specific vacancies in USAJobs that interest you and that you are eligible for as the positions are announced, following all procedures required in the vacancy announcement. Your score will be pulled from a secure database and used for determining the best qualified list.

Assessment Feedback

➤ **What kind of feedback will I receive after taking the assessments?**

All candidates who complete the assessments receive a confidential feedback score report about their performance in each of the competency areas assessed. This feedback score report will be available on your online testing website account. You will be notified that your feedback is posted on your account by the end of June 2014. A *Candidate Feedback Guide* can be accessed by clicking on the link at the top of your score report. This guide explains how to interpret the scores as well as each of the sections for the CEI and the multiple-choice components.

In addition, you may want to access the *Developmental Resource Guide* available on the Intranet and Internet sites referenced above. The *Developmental Resource Guide* contains “general tips” and recommended readings for improving your abilities in the general competency skill areas of the assessment process. Another resource available for developmental purposes on the Intranet site is the *Manual of Job-Related Thinking Skills*. The *Manual of Job-Related Thinking Skills* is a comprehensive self-administered training manual in job-related reasoning and critical thinking.

Effective Date of Test Scores

➤ **When will the scores from this “CEI Only” assessment opportunity open period become effective?**

Scores from this assessment opportunity open period will be effective for vacancy announcements that **open on or after June 30, 2014**. Your scores from this submission opportunity open period will be available for review in your online account in late-June 2014.

Contacts and Important Dates to Remember

For Questions About...	Contact...
Applying to complete the assessments or the USAJobs Test Opportunity Bulletin	Minneapolis Hiring Center at (952) 857-2916
The assessments or assessment scores; All other assessment-related inquiries	Personnel Research and Assessment Division by e-mail at PROM.support@dhs.gov
IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER	
CEI Only Announcement Open Period	April 28 – May 16, 2014
Scores are effective for vacancies that open on or after:	June 30, 2014