STATE UNIVERSITIES CIVIL SERVICE SYSTEM

Sunnycrest Center
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John Butler
Merit Board Chair
Gail Schiesser
Executive Director

TO: Designated Employer Representatives, Classification and Testing Personnel

FROM: Gail Schiesser, Executive Director

Gail M Schiesser
Digitally signed by Gail M Schiesser
Date: 2026.10.30 12:21:03 -05'00'

DATE: October 30, 2026

RE: **Preliminary Status Notice: Grounds Gardener Series**

A. **Purpose:** The State Universities Civil Service System continues to revise and modify its classification plan. The overall objective is to provide a structured and consistent classification and examination system that provides employment within the University System on the basis of merit and fitness.

B. **Background:** As a result of the passage of the Civil Rights Safeguard Act (Public Act 104-0744), the University System is reviewing employment practices to ensure that employment requirements for University System classifications are job-related, consistent with business necessity, and recognize appropriate paths to opportunity.

C. Changes:

The following classifications have been identified for revision:

1. **Assistant Grounds Gardener** (Classification Code Number 1982)
2. **Grounds Gardener** (Classification Code Number 1981)

D. Actions Required by Employers

1. **Feedback:** Due to the confidential nature of examination material, please upload feedback regarding these proposed revisions to the Class and Exam team by **Monday, December 14, 2026,** using Dropbox: www.dropbox.com/request/iepj5nfjz83jalfw7c14

2. If your feedback pertains to the business necessity of a Minimum Acceptable Qualification, please include the following information:
   a. How is the degree requirement consistent with business necessity? For example, what specific job skills require a degree? What is the necessary theoretical background provided by the degree? What is the expertise required?

b. Why can this requirement not be accomplished another way? For example, what evidence or data supports the position that an employee with experience in the job skills could not perform the job as well as a person with an educational degree?

3. **Examination Instruments**
   a. The examination instruments will be available for preview in the Dropbox folder provided to HR personnel.

   b. The examinations and scoring plans for this series are proposed for revision, which will require the voiding of registers. When the new examination and scoring plan becomes effective, the employer shall stop using previous testing materials in its possession related to this classification. However, any previous examination and scoring materials that contain notes or memoranda that are a public record, as defined in the Illinois Freedom of Information Act (5 ILCS 140/2), or the employer's policies, shall be retained as required under the employer's records retention policies.

   c. When the new examination and scoring plan becomes effective, the employer shall destroy all previous testing material in its possession related to this classification. However, any previous examination and scoring materials that contain notes or memoranda regarding a specific employee's examination and are attached to or are a part of that specific employee's examination shall be retained as required under the employer's records retention policies.

   d. Employers are responsible for administering appointment and promotional processes in accordance with the State Universities Civil Service Act (110 ILCS 70/36b et seq.) and the Illinois Administrative Code tit. 80, Ch. VI, Part 250. For more information, please see: www.sucss.illinois.gov/pages/sar/default.aspx

4. **Registers:**
   a. During this notice period, qualified applicants and candidates whose names are already on the original entry register by score may be scheduled for the examination upon request.
   b. Applicants to this classification and candidates on the original entry register should be informed that the current register of candidates by score will be voided when the new examination becomes effective. See Civil Service Rules, Section 250.50(d)(6).

c. Employment registers for this classification shall be voided upon the effective date published in the Final Status Notice.

d. Reemployment Registers: Reemployment Registers shall not be voided.

e. After the previous registers are voided, the employer shall establish a new original entry register by score on the basis of the new examination.

E. Contact Information: If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact the University System office at cecdivision@sucss.illinois.gov