

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS MANAGEMENT MANUAL	
Personnel Directive	Subject: <u>SELECTING EMPLOYEES IN PUBLIC WORKS</u>
<i>ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS, CITY OF LOS ANGELES</i>	

June 20, 2007

PERSONNEL DIRECTIVE NO.35

BACKGROUND

The Board of Public Works recognizes that the effective delivery of Departmental services begins with the selection of qualified employees, and that hiring qualified employees requires the use of job-related selection procedures. In November 1991, the Mayor's revised Executive Directive No. 5, "The Rule of Three Whole Scores and the Employee Selection Process," required City Departments to use appropriate employee selection procedures and maintain certification documentation for monitoring the Equal Employment Opportunity impact of selection decisions. In April 1995, the latest revision of the Public Works Equal Employment Opportunity Plan required each Bureau to monitor its employee selection procedures for job-relatedness.

The Office of Management-Employee Services (OMES) is now revising Personnel Directive No. 35, which continues the basic selection guidelines first established by the Board of Public Works in 1974. (While the Directive does not replace paygrade advancement procedures covered by Public Works Personnel Directive No. 22, it should be used in conjunction with those procedures.)

BOARD NOTIFICATION

The Board of Public Works, as the Head of the Department, must play an active role in the selection of Department management. To that end, Bureau Directors must notify their respective liaison commissioners, in writing, of vacancies at the level of Division Head and above, within one week of the position being vacated and at the beginning of recruitment/selection process. The notification should summarize the recruitment and selection plan for filling the vacancy including expected timeframes, guidelines and procedures should be followed when filling any vacant positions in each Bureau. Carefully review and adhere to Personnel Policy No. 15, Selection of Top Management in Public Works, for vacancies at the level described in Policy No. 15. Questions can be directed to either the Bureau's Personnel Section or OMES.

I. Equal Employment Opportunity and the Selection Process

The Department of Public Works is dedicated to the merit system and to a selection process whereby all job applicants are evaluated according to their skills and abilities and accorded an equal opportunity to compete for jobs.

II. Basic Responsibilities Regarding Employee Selection

Each Bureau has three basic responsibilities regarding selection: 1) To accurately define job duties, requirements and other conditions of employment; 2) To select the best qualified candidate(s) based on job-related factors and selection procedures; and 3) To document selection methods and decisions.

III. Essential Components of an Effective Selection Procedure

Each Bureau's selection procedures should include the following:

- A. An assessment of the specific duties of the position to be filled;
- B. A method of assessing the qualifications of candidates based upon job-related factors;
- C. Notification to candidates of the selection method(s) to be used to fill the position;
- D. Documentation of the final selection decision;
- E. Notification to all candidates of the selection decision; and
- F. A method for candidates to review their performance upon request.

IV. Determining the Candidate Pool in Filling Vacancies

Vacant positions can be filled through various means, including: certification of an eligible list; transfers between Departments or Bureaus; temporary appointments (e.g., emergency, limited, temporary training positions, etc.); transfers under Charter Section 1014; intra-Bureau reassignment, rotation, or bid assignment; and paygrade advancement. A combination of the above methods may also be used, such as combining transfer candidates with names from an eligible list.

When filling a vacancy, Bureaus should choose the means that provides the best pool of qualified candidates, taking into consideration applicable Department policies and procedures and any MOU provision or other labor agreement (e.g., "bid procedure") that governs how positions should be filled.

V. Preparing for the Selection by Assessing Job Duties and Tasks

The selection of qualified employees to fill positions requires each Bureau to do an accurate assessment of the job duties and tasks to be performed. For every vacant position, a list of tasks must be prepared. (A sample task list is provided as Attachment A). In lieu of the above task list, an updated position description can fulfill the same function. From the task list or the position description, the qualifications -- skills, knowledge, abilities, etc. -- necessary to perform the tasks can be determined. These qualifications (examples are shown in Attachment B) should be closely tied to specific tasks.

VI. Methods of Reviewing Candidates' Qualifications

Each Bureau must determine the most appropriate way of reviewing the candidates' qualifications to perform the job tasks of the vacant position. This review may include one or more selection methods such as an interview, a performance test, a written test, a writing sample, a screening of the application/resume for past work experience, and a review of past work performance. The most frequently used selection method is an interview, which is the focus of this Personnel Directive. However, it is up to each Bureau to choose what other job-related selection/screening techniques might also be valuable. If other methods are being considered, then the staff of the Employee Relations Division of the Office of Management-Employee Services should be contacted. All candidates must be notified of the method(s) to be used to evaluate their qualifications to perform the job duties of the vacant position for which they are competing. This notification should be provided to the candidates when they first indicate their interest in the vacancy to the hiring Bureau, and should include the steps (e.g., interview) in the selection procedure.

VII. Developing and Conducting the Selection Interview

The following steps should be taken to provide job-related interviews.

- A. Choosing the Interview Panel: An interview panel should be composed of a minimum of two interviewers, (please see Attachment C, "Interview Briefing instructions for Raters"), with panel members from the concerned Bureau at a classification or pay grade level higher than the vacant position. At least one (1) member of the interview panel must be from outside the division in which the vacancy is assigned, unless the vacancy is on an entry - or journey level. Where panel members from another Bureau/Department are chosen for their special interviewing expertise (e.g., Office of Management-Employee Services staff), the level of the interviewer may be different.

It is preferable that interviewers have a direct knowledge of the specific duties of the job, even if this means that they may know one or more of the candidates.

PERSONNEL DIRECTIVE 35

An interviewer, however, who believes that he/she may not be capable of making a fair assessment should not participate in the interview process. If this occurs, another qualified interviewer should be obtained if only one interviewer remains.

- B. Preparing an Interview Rating Sheet: After the Bureau has determined the essential job duties/tasks and identified the candidate qualifications to be tested in the interview, a rating sheet should be prepared. Each skill, knowledge or ability should be rated separately and the ratings should be based on evidence observed in the interview that can be described on the rating sheet. Each interviewer should rate each applicant separately. The use of a rating sheet assists in ensuring that consistent criteria are used to measure all candidates and that critical documentation is provided to substantiate the selection process. (A sample rating sheet is provided as Attachment B). If a review of a candidate's record or attendance is part of the process, then the evaluation of this review should be included in the rating sheet comments if it has an impact on the selection.
- C. Preparing Job-Related Interview Questions: The major purpose of the interview is to get information about the candidate's qualifications for the job. Proper interviewing techniques-- especially the use of effective job-related questions--play a large part in determining whether useful information is obtained. Certain appropriate, core interview questions should be prepared in advance to measure the skills, abilities, experience, etc., of each candidate. Similar questions should be asked of all candidates, with approximately the same amount of time given to each candidate. Follow-up questions may be appropriate depending on the response from the candidates.

Open-ended questions that allow candidates to express themselves fully, in a frank and honest manner, are most useful. A candidate's work experience is important and is a natural way to start an interview. Some key questions might be:

1. Would you describe your present job?
2. What are your major responsibilities in that job?
3. How do those responsibilities relate to the job vacancy for which you are being interviewed?
4. What are some examples of significant decisions or recommendations you have made in your present job?

Other questions could relate to the candidate's relevant training and education, specific qualifications for the vacant position, and career interests and goals. At the close of the interview, ask the candidate if there is anything else he/she would like to add about their qualifications.

D. Avoiding Interviewing Errors or Discriminatory Questions:

Some common errors in questioning include:

1. Using too many closed questions that can be answered by "yes" or "no."
2. Asking unimaginative questions for which most candidates have prepared ready-made answers. (e.g., "Are you willing to work hard?")
3. Using leading questions, which suggest the "right" answer to the candidate by giving hints to the response the interviewer wants.
4. Asking questions that sound like they are discriminatory, even if they are not intended to be discriminatory. Interviewers should avoid questions, which touch directly on the following areas:
 - a. Age, date of birth, or questions that identify age
 - b. Previous address, length of time at present residence, whether renting or buying
 - c. Loans or financial obligations, wage attachments, bankruptcies
 - d. Maiden name, parents' surnames or places of employment
 - e. Marital status, spouse's residence or employment
 - f. Ages and number of children, child care arrangements
 - g. Religion or name of Priest, Rabbi, or Minister
 - h. Race
 - i. Foreign languages spoken, unless required for job
 - j. Memberships in non-professional organizations, such as social clubs, societies, and lodges
 - k. Arrest record
 - l. Physical disabilities or medical condition (Consult the Employee Relations Division of the Office of Management-Employee Services, if you suspect the candidate has a physical or mental condition, which would impair performance.)

- E. Additional Interview Guidelines: Other guidelines for making interviews productive include: planning enough time for each interview; arranging for interviews to be free from distractions and interruptions; making the office environment comfortable and private; reviewing the candidate's resume/application prior to the interview; and refraining from open conversations in the office about the candidates. Candidates previously interviewed within six months for the same/similar position do not have to be re-interviewed but must be given the option to do so.
- F. Interviewing a Disabled Candidate: The interview must be conducted in compliance with federal and state laws covering disabled candidates. The Bureau should ensure that any requested reasonable accommodations are provided during the interview; inquiries pertaining to a candidate's disability are avoided; and assumptions are not made that a particular disability will automatically preclude a disabled candidate from performing a given task under certain work conditions. Any questions regarding such interviews should be directed to the Employee Relations Division of the Office of Management-Employee Services before the interview is held.

VIII. Making the Selection Decision

Each candidate's qualifications should be compared with the requirements of the job and with the qualifications of all other available candidates. Evaluation information such as a candidate's attendance record and/or past work performance may also be reviewed (See also Section VII.B regarding documenting attendance reviews). If contact is to be made with the candidate's current or prior supervisor, permission from the candidate should first be obtained. In making the selection decision, judgment should be reserved until all candidates have participated in the selection process. Then, if one candidate is found to be substantially better qualified for the position than any other candidate, that person should be selected. All selection decisions should be reviewed by the Bureau Director or his/her designee.

IX. Notification and Candidates' Review/Appeal of the Selection Decision

As soon as possible after a selection is made, the Bureau should notify all competing candidates who were not selected in writing or by telephone and, upon a request from any of those candidates, discuss the reasons for their non-selection. Also upon request, the Bureau should be prepared to discuss and/or make available for a candidate's review a summary of selection comments and areas of a candidate's strengths and/or weaknesses. Under no circumstances should the interview rating sheets be given to the candidates. (NOTE: Provisions of the State of California Public Records Act regarding the right to privacy prohibit providing specific information on other candidates in the selection process.)

A candidate who is not selected and who believes this may have been because of discrimination may contact the Bureau's Equal Employment Opportunity Coordinator and then, if necessary, the Office of Management-Employee Services. If the candidate is still not satisfied, he/she should be advised to call the Equal Employment Opportunities Section or the Office of Discrimination Complaint Resolution of the Personnel Department to discuss the matter. A candidate also has the right to pursue a complaint against a selection decision through the applicable grievance procedure. (If a candidate files a discrimination complaint, then chooses to file a grievance, the processing of the discrimination complaint will cease in favor of the grievance procedure.)

X. Documenting the Selection Process

Bureaus must prepare accurate and complete documentation on each step in the selection process. After a selection decision is made, the Bureau must assemble and retain, at minimum, the following records: any certification documents and/or list of candidates obtained from other candidate pools; resumes and applications from all candidates; a set of interview records listing job tasks, the required candidate qualifications, the questions used, the interviewers' names and the comments made by each (including any worksheets or notes made by the interviewers in addition to the interview rating sheets) and the scores received by the candidates; and a clear indication of why the selected candidate was chosen. (This may be recorded in a separate note in the file and/or on the rating sheet). These records should be maintained in accordance with City Records Retention procedures and kept on site for at least three years for audit or monitoring purposes or in the event of a related grievance or discrimination complaint. The Bureau Employee Selection Coordinator is responsible for reviewing and monitoring selection documentation.

XI. Monitoring the Employee Selection Process

Bureau responsibilities include: maintaining and analyzing selection records for job-relatedness and consistency with goals; reviewing selection results regularly to investigate any patterns that may indicate areas of concern; and providing selection reports and data as required by the Office of Management-Employee Services, the Personnel Department, and/or the Board of Public Works.

XII. Selecting Employees For Supervisory Positions

Bureaus selecting employees to fill supervisory vacancies should review Public Works Personnel Policy No. 14, "Improving the Quality of Supervision in Public Works." That Policy includes specific supervisory tasks for which all Departmental supervisors are responsible as well as sample questions to be used during interviews.

XIII. Using the Probationary Period in the Selection Process

When a selected candidate is required to be evaluated during a probationary period (e.g., a candidate hired from a certification list), the Bureau should treat that period as part of the selection process. Probation should be conducted in accordance with Public Works Personnel Policy No. 6 and Personnel Directive No. 26, both titled "Probationary Evaluations."

For additional information concerning any of the above selection guidelines and procedures, consult your Bureau Employee Selection Coordinator or the Employee Relations Division of the Office of Management-Employee Services.

XIV. "Acting" Assignments (See also Personnel Directive No. 20)

In some cases, a position may be vacant or the employee in that position may be temporarily absent. In order to have that position's duties continue to be performed, management may wish to make an "acting" assignment to the position. For example, if a Senior Management Analyst I position is vacant, management may wish to designate a Management Analyst II as the "acting" Senior I. Similarly, if a Street Services Superintendent I in a particular division is absent for a period of time, management may wish to have those duties performed by another Street Services Superintendent I who is designated as "acting."

It is important to note that "acting" designations are informal assignments. They are not official appointments such as emergency or limited appointments. "Acting" assignments do not result in a change in the employee's paygrade or Civil Service classification. However, since many Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) contain provisions for paying a bonus for certain temporary assignments, the applicable MOU should be consulted to determine if a bonus is applicable in these instances.

Consistent with merit and equal employment opportunity principles, management shall follow a formal selection process when selecting employees for "acting" assignments, following the applicable guidelines set forth in this Directive.

Management retains the right to make immediate short-term acting work assignments based on operational needs. The formal selection process is only necessary when management plans to announce an "acting" appointment in some official capacity. For example, when an employee is on vacation for three weeks, management most likely would not announce an "acting" assignment for that employee, so no selection process would be necessary. If that employee were to be on a leave of absence for a significant amount of time, or if the position were vacant, and management planned to distribute announcements of who would take over the position on an "acting" assignment.

Exempt Appointments

See Attachment D for Exempt Hiring Guidelines approved by the City Council on August 8, 2000.

TASK LIST

Bureau _____

Division _____

Classification Clerk Typist _____

Date _____

Tasks:

- 70 Types Bureau/Division letters, memoranda, forms, etc. on a daily basis.
- 70 Answers Division telephone calls, routes calls to Division employees, takes telephone messages as needed.
- 70 Serves at the public counter for two hours each day representing the Bureau, answering questions, directing the public and providing requested information.
- 70 Types reports, letters and other documents.
- 70 Files Division records and forms on a daily basis so that such records and forms are easily retrievable by Division employees.

PUBLIC WORKS INTERVIEW RATING SHEET

CLASSIFICATION TITLE: Clerk Typist APPLICANT:

BUREAU: _____ INTERVIEWER: _____ DATE:

CANDIDATES QUALIFICATIONS (SKILLS, KNOWLEDGES, ABILITIES, ETC.)	COMMENTS	RATING*
70 Skills in typing correspondence and forms		
70 Telephone communication skills		
70 Skills in assisting the public in person		
70 Ability to use WordPerfect		
5. Knowledge of filing and cross referencing procedures		
ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:		

OVERALL RATING:

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70 The following guide should be used in assigning a rating:
 90 – 99 -- OUTSTANDING skills, knowledges, abilities etc.
 80 – 89 -- GOOD skills, knowledges, abilities, etc.
 70 – 79 -- ADEQUATE skills, knowledges. Abilities, etc.
 Below 70 – INADEQUATE skills, knowledges, abilities, etc.

INTERVIEW BRIEFING INSTRUCTIONS FOR RATERS

1. Confidentiality

All interview paperwork and discussions are confidential; any disclosure of confidential information is subject to *disciplinary action* under the Department's disciplinary policy. Raters are not to disclose involvement in the selection process to any potential candidates. Raters must not relate any information regarding the specifics of the selection process, either before or after the interviews have been completed, to anyone other than personnel staff. If Raters are approached by a candidate seeking information on the selection process, or any other information about the interviews, refer the candidate to personnel staff. All paperwork used in the interview (notes on scratch paper, etc.) must be retained in the interview folders and not be removed from the interview room.

2. Objective Evaluations

At the beginning of each day, Raters are to review the list of candidates to be interviewed to ensure that each candidate can be rated fairly and objectively based **solely** upon information obtained in the interview and pertinent information on resumes and/or applications. Should a Rater feel unable to rate a particular candidate fairly and objectively, the Rater must immediately inform personnel staff so that an alternate may be arranged. (Merely knowing a candidate or being familiar with a candidate's work does not necessarily disqualify a Rater from interviewing that candidate, although it may.)

3. Job-Related Questions Only

Do not ask questions related to the candidate's race, national origin, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, age, religion, creed, marital status, disability, medical condition, including having or being perceived as having AIDS or the HIV virus, or their veteran's status. All of these subject areas have absolutely nothing to do with the candidate's qualifications for the position. If information in these areas is offered during the interview, Raters should move to the next question without comment or follow-up. All questions proposed for use in the interview have been developed by the Raters well in advance of the interview and have been approved by personnel as being job-related and appropriate. (The position description previously provided by the Raters was critical in making this determination.) Each question **must** be designed or developed for the purpose of obtaining information from the candidate related to a particular rating factor. Follow-up questions are appropriate, but only when there is a need to gain clarification or further insight to a prior candidate response. The Raters and personnel, together, have identified the Rating factors most important to successful performance of the duties and responsibilities of the position(s). The purpose of each question asked is to obtain information from the candidate in order to rate his or her qualifications in each of these rating factor areas. All candidates must be provided the opportunity to respond to at least one question in each rating factor area, although they do not need to be the same questions.

4. Interview Plan

On the day of interviews, a chairperson is identified for each rating panel. This person is essentially responsible for ensuring that the panel adheres to the interview schedule as closely as is possible and for providing all interview documentation to personnel staff prior to leaving the area. The Raters should have a plan for interviewing candidates with respect to who will ask which question when. The questions to be asked of each candidate should be indicated on each Rater's list of questions by placing the Rater's initials next to each question to be used in the interview. The number of the question asked in each rating factor should be indicated on the rating sheet. These documents will be retained as support to any future challenge to the selection process.

5. Interview Schedule

Candidates are generally scheduled 40 minutes apart. This allows approximately five minutes to review the candidate's application, 20-25 minutes to interview the candidate, and five to ten minutes to score the candidate on the rating sheet. Raters will need to use their own interviewing skills in getting candidates to modify the length of their answers to conform to this schedule. It is important to maintain equity in the amount of time each candidate is allowed for an interview to avoid later allegations of favoritism/discrimination.

6. Rater's Regular Office Duties

Raters should refrain from conducting their regular office duties while interviewing to ensure that all candidates are given their complete attention. The role of the Rater in a selection process is an important one, not only to candidates, but also to the successful fulfillment of Department objectives. If candidates develop the impression during the interview that the Raters are not sufficiently focused on the task at hand, it may affect their decision to accept a job offer which may be extended and cost the Department the opportunity of appointing an excellent candidate.

7. During the Interview

While each candidate will have been provided a job description prior to the actual interview, candidates may have further questions about the position. Raters should only respond to questions from candidates which represent efforts to develop a better understanding of those duties and responsibilities, such as whether or not a 9/80 schedule is available in the position, expected reporting time, whether or not there is a requirement to drive or the degree to which field work is required. All other questions, such as those related to salary, should be referred to personnel staff. Additionally, do not accept written materials from candidates, such as letters of recommendation or writing samples, unless all candidates were requested to provide such. Simply explain to the candidate that you are unable to accept any written materials during the interview process.

8. After the Interview – Scoring

The rating sheet is a worksheet and is used to document an evaluation performed of the candidate's qualifications as they were presented in the interview. While taking excessive

notes during the interview is discouraged, the Rater should feel free to note on the rating sheet those factors that could have a significant bearing on the candidate's evaluation. The purpose for having two or more Raters in a selection process is to obtain, at least initially, independent evaluations of the candidates. Beginning from the point where Raters are first provided a candidate's application and extending through to the point where the Raters have assigned a score to each rating factor, Raters should not make any statement which could alter another Rater's impression of the candidate. The assigned score in each rating factor should be circled. In order to provide an accurate, meaningful final score, Raters should use the full range of scores in each rating factor. For instance, Raters should not be compassionate and give a candidate points on a rating factor when the candidate has shown absolutely no skills in that area. In such cases, the candidate should receive zero. (Descriptions of what a particular score represents, relative to the level of the qualifications presented by the candidate, are provided with each rating sheet.) Once a score has been assigned in each rating factor, Raters may feel free to discuss the candidate to ensure that no information presented during the interview is overlooked. While no Rater can or will be forced to change an assigned score, Raters are required to discuss any rating factor where there is significant disagreement among the Raters on the rating sheet. Any corrections to what was first put on the rating sheet should be crossed out and initialed. A Rater's point of reference could change following each interview. Therefore, at the conclusion of the last interview, Raters must review all rating sheets to ensure that all candidates were evaluated with the same point of reference used to evaluate the final candidate. Whether or not there will be additional days of interviews, all rating sheets must be complete at the end of each day. On multiple day interviews, raters will be provided the interview materials from previous days for comparison of candidates.

9. After the Interview – Comments

Each rating factor should contain a comment. The comment must be based solely on information gained in the interview and must be reflective of that information. The comments should be specific and explanatory. A person uninvolved in the particular selection process should be able to differentiate the qualifications of one candidate from another based on the comments included on the rating sheet. (Comments such as "adequate experience" or "very good skills" are not sufficient.) Comments should relate both the strengths and weaknesses observed in the candidate.

10. The Job Offer

Personnel will review all selection documentation. **No job offer can be made until this documentation is complete.** The Certification Coordinator then prepares a scoring summary of all candidates. This summary is then available for Managers to review in the Bureau's Personnel Section. (Due to the confidential nature of the information, the documents may not be removed from the Personnel Section.)

PERSONNEL DIRECTIVE NO. 35

A background check should be conducted on the selected candidate prior to making a job offer. This background check should comprise of, at minimum, a review of the employee's personnel folder and contact with the employee's current supervisor for a reference. Former supervisors may also be contacted if a more thorough check is desired. If the background check reveals any factor serious enough to result in non-selection, the raters should include a memo in the selection package describing the negative factor and why it was serious enough to result in the non-selection of the candidate. Examples of such negative factors may include a history of poor attendance, negative comments in recent annual evaluations, disciplinary memos or suspensions, or a poor reference from a supervisor.

The appropriate individual will then extend the job offer, including the amount of time to be allowed before a decision is required. (If there were candidates who were determined to be equally qualified for the position, within a one point range according to the selection criteria, Raters would first need to provide documentation of the job-related reason(s) that one candidate was selected over another before a job offer could be extended.)

In preparation for the interviews to fill our current vacancy, I have read and understood the information contained in each section of this document. (Please print your name beneath your signature.)

Signed: _____

Date:

The Personnel Department's Hiring Guidelines for Exempt Positions.

8-8-00 - Personnel Committee report ADOPTED to:

1. ENDORSE the Personnel Department's recommendation that guidelines for a job-related, exempt selection process consist of the following elements:
 - a. A description of the duties and responsibilities assigned to the position and the skills, knowledge and abilities required for their successful performance.
 - b. Appropriate minimums for education, years of experience and other professional requirements (Also required by Section 1001 when the position exemption request is sent from the Mayor to the Council).
 - c. A search process of appropriate scope, direction and focus, the goal of which is a broad, diverse and highly qualified candidate pool. Such a process should include the opportunity for both current City employees and outside candidates to compete.
 - d. A review and selection process which is focused on an evaluation of candidates' qualifications as they relate to stated job requirements.
 - e. Use of qualified, knowledgeable and unbiased evaluators, including where practical, someone from outside the appointing department or bureau, to provide input to the appointing authority.
 - f. A background and reference checking process designed to establish that a candidate is free of issues which could negatively impact anticipated job performance and provides additional insight into a candidate's strengths and weaknesses.
 - g. Written documentation of recruitment and selection activities.
2. INSTRUCT the Personnel Department to distribute the exempt hiring guidelines to all department general managers.
3. INSTRUCT the Personnel Department to provide a quarterly tally of Charter Section 1001(b) "management, professional, scientific or expert services" exemptions with a breakdown by City departments, including proprietary departments, and bureaus.

8-15-00 - File to Personnel Committee Clerk OK

8-15-00 - File in files