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**HOUSE BILL 2309**

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**State of Washington**

**69th Legislature**

**2026 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Leavitt, Rude, Reed, Zahn, Kloba, Doglio, Ormsby, and Jacobsen; by request of Office of Financial Management

Prefiled 01/07/26. Read first time 01/12/26. Referred to Committee on State Government & Tribal Relations.

1 AN ACT Relating to reducing barriers to state employment by  
2 eliminating postgraduate degree requirements that are unnecessary;  
3 and reenacting and amending RCW 41.06.157.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 **Sec. 1.** RCW 41.06.157 and 2024 c 330 s 11 and 2024 c 70 s 2 are  
6 each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

7 (1) To promote the most effective use of the state's workforce  
8 and improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the delivery of  
9 services to the citizens of the state, the director shall adopt and  
10 maintain a comprehensive classification plan for all positions in the  
11 classified service. The classification plan must:

12 (a) Be simple and streamlined;

13 (b) Support state agencies in responding to changing  
14 technologies, economic and social conditions, and the needs of its  
15 citizens;

16 (c) Value workplace diversity;

17 (d) Facilitate the reorganization and decentralization of  
18 governmental services;

19 (e) Enhance mobility and career advancement opportunities;

20 (f) Consider rates in other public employment and private  
21 employment in the state;

1 (g) Not require a two-year (~~or~~), four-year, or postgraduate  
2 college degree as the only way to demonstrate qualifications for the  
3 role unless that degree is required by law for an employee to perform  
4 the essential functions of a classification; and

5 (h) Recognize that persons legally authorized to work in the  
6 United States under federal law, including deferred action for  
7 childhood arrivals recipients, are eligible for employment unless  
8 prohibited by other state or federal law.

9 (2) An appointing authority and an employee organization  
10 representing classified employees of the appointing authority for  
11 collective bargaining purposes may jointly request the director of  
12 financial management to initiate a classification study.

13 (3) For institutions of higher education and related boards, the  
14 director may adopt special salary ranges to be competitive with  
15 positions of a similar nature in the state or the locality in which  
16 the institution of higher education or related board is located.

17 (4) The director may undertake salary surveys of positions in  
18 other public and private employment to establish market rates. Any  
19 salary survey information collected from private employers which  
20 identifies a specific employer with salary rates which the employer  
21 pays to its employees shall not be subject to public disclosure under  
22 chapter 42.56 RCW.

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