

PROGRESSIVE TECHNICAL WORK EXPERIENCE

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The Division of Highways Technician Certification Board (the Board) has created this document to provide guidance in defining “progressive technical work experience”. While quality work experience is of high importance, credit awarded for training via Technical Development Hours (TDH’s) remains a critical aspect of the certification program as described in the Qualifications and Guidelines and should not be overlooked or neglected by the technician. To be sure, experience and training are equally important.

The concept of progressive technical work experience is based on the fact that employees may enter the workforce at lower levels and move through progressively higher levels during their career by acquiring the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities through training and experience *and* by accepting changes in job assignments.

Technical work under direct supervision of a technically competent person is generally required for a technician to learn technical skills. The Board defines “technical experience” as work performed under the supervision of a PE, PS, TRET CNO, TRET SR or other technically competent person directly related to the highway design and construction industry. Technical work is characterized by high levels of math, inspection proficiencies, computer design proficiencies, and/or surveying skills. Each applicant’s experience is evaluated and years of experience are awarded for technical experience only.

In state government, the West Virginia Division of Transportation (DOT) evaluates work experience based on knowledge of agency organization, programs, positions and personnel and establishes appropriate job classifications for each position. To ensure that the Boards’ review of all technician work experience is conducted on a systematic basis and equitably applied, the Board uses this 'fact finding' element of DOT position classifications as a basis for reviewing the work experience of each applicant. The Board’s intent is to only certify qualified applicants at no more than one level higher than they are currently working in order for the applicant to be eligible for increased responsibility (e.g., an applicant working at Level III and meeting all other requirements of the Qualifications and Guidelines may be certified at Level IV.)

DOT job classifications for Transportation Engineering Technicians (TRET) are developed into five class series. A class series is a series of job classes having the same kind of work, but with ascending levels of difficulty, complexity and responsibility. Each of these levels has certain defined criteria to assure a uniform leveling process. The Board applies these criteria to evaluate the work experience of all applicants whether classified by the DOT or not. A complete description of DOT TRET class specification documents and the type of work at each level may be found on the DOT’s website at <https://transportation.wv.gov/Human-Resources/Pages/CareerOpportunities.aspx>.

Transportation Engineering Technician Trainee (Entry Level) = (Level I—TRET TR) - an entry level position having a defined training period and a formal training program with established competencies to be acquired. Level I work is not recognized for more than a total of five (5) years of experience.

Transportation Engineering Technician Associate (Entry Level continued) = (Level II—TRET AS) - this level can be both in a training capacity or work of limited complexity, with little or no latitude to vary methods or procedures. Work is usually performed under close supervision. Work is frequently of a basic and recurring nature.

Transportation Engineering Technician (Full-Performance Level) = (Level III—TRET) - this level can be characterized by the performance of a full range of duties. Incumbent has some latitude for independent judgment and may vary work methods and procedures, but usually within prescribed parameters. Work is usually performed under general supervision. Work is frequently of some variety and the incumbent may set priorities. Level III is the expected working level for any fully competent technician. While many technicians may spend their entire careers at Level III, the Board awards no more than ten (10) years of experience at Level III and below to allow the technician to be certified as a Level IV (TRET SR).

Transportation Engineering Technician Senior (Advanced Level) = (Level IV—TRET SR) - this level is assigned to duties and responsibilities which are complex, difficult and varied. Work requires the development and adoption of non-standard procedures and has more impact and consequence of error than the full-performance level. Work may be performed under limited supervision or under limited direction. Incumbent possesses considerable latitude to accomplish tasks; may include lead worker duties. A minimum of two (2) years of experience at Level IV is required to be certified as a Level V (TRET CNO).

Transportation Engineering Technologist (Expert Level) = (Level V—TRET CNO) – the Board recognizes this level as the highest attainable level of technician certification.