



HIRING OPTIONS GUIDE



PHASE 1

PHASE 2

PHASE 3

PHASE 4



OVERVIEW

Hiring options, or hiring authorities, are regulatory requirements under which certain individuals are eligible to be hired. These options may enable hiring managers to set aside more traditional hiring procedures to select the best person for the job. Your HR professional will help you determine what the options are and which are appropriate for your situation.

The categories include Internal and External (special, other and critical).





INTERNAL HIRING OPTIONS

Applies to Current Federal Employees

The following pages provide a brief description of various ways that a vacant position can be filled within your organization with current federal employees. There may be additional requirements for positions subject to local bargaining agreements. Contact your HR professional for more information on these options.

DETAIL

A temporary assignment to a set of duties or to a position at the same, lower or higher grade. There is no change in pay, and employees do not need to be qualified to be detailed. However, they must meet positive education requirements, professional certification, and licensure requirements where applicable. Under the General Schedule (GS) and the Federal Wage System (FWS), details may be done in 120-day increments up to one year. Details to higher-graded duties may be made without competition up to 120 days (under GS and FWS). Employees on detail continue to officially occupy their position of record and resume those when the detail ends.

REASSIGNMENT

An assignment to a position at the same grade. When the position has promotion potential to a higher level, competition may be required.

CHANGE TO LOWER GRADE

A permanent assignment to a position at a lower level. Competition may be required if the position has promotion potential to a higher level.





TRANSFER

Movement to your organization from an agency outside your Component. Under GS or FWS, this may or may not involve a grade change.

PROMOTION

A temporary, term or permanent assignment to a position at a higher level. Temporary promotions may be made without competition up to 120 days in a 12-month period.

NONCOMPETITIVE PROMOTION

An employee who has previously held a position on a permanent basis under career or career-conditional appointment at or above the grade level of the position to be filled may be noncompetitively promoted. Since these employees previously competed for positions at the higher grade, they must only meet the basic qualification requirements of the position.

CAREER LADDER

A position that is filled at the entry level to allow an employee to develop, through training, to the full performance level.

MERIT PROMOTION

Merit Promotion refers to the placement, promotion, transfer, reassignment and other movement of competitive service employees. One of the primary objectives is to staff DoD and its Components with the best qualified candidates while enhancing employees' careers by giving all employees a fair chance to compete for advancement. The underlying principle of Merit Promotion Programs is the identification, qualification, evaluation and selection of candidates based solely on job-related criteria with legitimate position requirements.

Positions filled through merit promotion may use an automated recruitment and referral tool for your Component. When an individual announcement is used, applicants apply directly to the specific announcement.

If your Component uses an open continuous announcement, candidates must have a résumé on file at the servicing HR office or regional center and apply to inventory announcements to receive consideration. Candidates are matched against the skills of the position being filled. A reasonable number of candidates possessing the greatest number of skills are referred for selection consideration.



ALTERNATE CERTIFICATION

This method of recruitment may be accomplished by (1) the selecting official or (2) the servicing HR office depending upon your Component's or local merit promotion policy. Local procedures may vary depending upon any labor/management agreements and/or merit promotion policies.

(1) If the selecting official uses this method, the selecting official must maintain documentation including the source of employees and list of employees considered, method and assessment criteria used to assess employees, individual employee ratings, identification of what constitutes the highest-quality group and selectee's name.

(2) If the servicing HR office accomplishes the process, the selecting official forwards the recruitment request to the servicing HR office containing the employee's name and social security number, the vacancy information (e.g., PD number) and the request for personnel action checklist to the servicing HR office. The servicing HR office enters the appropriate information into the automated tool to compare the individuals qualifications to pre-established assessment criteria to determine if the name-requested employee is "among the best qualified." If the employee meets the best qualified criteria, the selection of the name-requested candidate may be finalized without a formal referral certificate (with additional candidates) being issued to the selecting official. This process ensures the name-requested candidate has been "alternatively certified" through competitive criteria and is within reach for selection. If the name-requested candidate is certified as among the best qualified, the request for personnel action is annotated, and the selection is processed.

MODIFICATION TO QUALIFICATION STANDARDS

The experience requirements defined in any qualification standard may be modified for certain noncompetitive actions, such as reassignments and changes-to-lower grade, to allow the identification of closely related experience to be qualifying. This flexibility allows managers to select candidates who clearly show the capability to perform the major task requirements of the position being filled based on closely related experience. Requirements for professional certifications and licenses, however, may not be waived. For consistency visit the OPM reference section for "Application of Qualification Standards". Located at:
<http://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/classification-qualifications/general-schedule-qualification-policies/#url=update>

Note: If you determine that your request needs OPM's approval, contact the DCPAS, Staffing Policy Advisory Branch, Staffing and Civilian Transition Assistance Division on 703-882-5196 for further instructions prior to submitting your package to OPM.



EXTERNAL HIRING OPTIONS

Applies to General Public, Former Military, Former Federal Employee or Spouse of Relocating Military Member or DoD Civilian

The following pages provide a brief description of various ways that a vacant position can be filled from outside the current federal work force. Each section addresses a different category of External Hiring Option: Special External Hiring Options, Other External Hiring Options and Critical Hiring Options (authorized for severe shortages or critical need programs). Contact your HR professional for more information on these options.





SPECIAL EXTERNAL HIRING OPTIONS

MILITARY/CIVILIAN SPOUSES OR FAMILY MEMBERS

FORMER OVERSEAS EMPLOYEES

HIRED UNDER EXECUTIVE ORDER 12721

Appointments may be made to eligible employees returning to the Continental United States (CONUS). In order to be eligible, the employee must have worked overseas for a total of 52 weeks as an appropriated fund federal employee while being a family member of a civilian employee, a non-appropriated fund employee or uniformed servicemember serving overseas, and must have received a fully successful (pass) performance rating. Eligibility is limited to three years following the date of return from overseas to the United States to resume residence.

SPOUSE OF RELOCATING DoD CIVILIAN

A spouse of a relocating active-duty military member or DOD civilian employee, may apply to vacancy announcements regardless of the Area of Consideration, during the 30 days preceding through the six months following his or her sponsor's relocation to the new commuting area.





MILITARY/CIVILIAN SPOUSES OR FAMILY MEMBERS

NONCOMPETITIVE APPOINTMENT OF CERTAIN MILITARY SPOUSES

Effective 11 September 2009, a military spouse may be noncompetitively appointed to a temporary, term or permanent position providing he or she meets certain eligibility criteria. Eligibility is limited to a maximum of two years from the date of documented eligibility and to the geographical area indicated on the servicemember's PCS orders. However, the geographic restriction does not apply to unmarried widows/widowers. Additionally, the spouse must have been married to the servicemember at the time the servicemember received their orders to relocate, became 100% disabled or was killed. Eligibility for this noncompetitive hiring option falls into these major categories:

- A spouse of a U.S. Armed Forces servicemember serving on Active Duty (not for training) for more than 180 days, provided the spouse relocates to the member's new permanent duty station.
- A spouse of a U.S. Armed Forces servicemember who is retired from Active Duty with a documented Service-connected disability rating of 100%.
- A spouse of a U.S. Armed Forces servicemember who retired or was released or discharged from Active Duty and has a disability rating of 100% as documented by the Department of Veterans Affairs.
- A spouse of a U.S. Armed Forces servicemember killed while on Active Duty. In this case, the spouse must be the un-remarried widow/widower of the deceased servicemember to meet eligibility.

Supporting documentation required may include:

- a copy of the marriage or death certificate
- a copy of the PCS Orders
- a copy of the member's DD-214
- Veterans Administration (VA) documentation

VETERANS OPPORTUNITY TO WORK (VOW) TO HIRE HEROES ACT OF 2011

President Obama signed VOW on November 21, 2011. The VOW act amends chapter 21 of title 5, USC by adding section 2108a. This new section:

- Requires Federal agencies to treat active duty service members as veterans, disabled veterans, or preference eligibles for purposes of appointment in the competitive service when service members submit a Certification of expected discharge (under Honorable conditions).
- Agencies must accept, process, and consider applications for appointment from any service members who submit a certification in the same manner as they would consider other preference eligible.
- Prior to appointment, veterans preference must be verified IAW 5 USC 2108.



PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

People with disabilities may be hired through the traditional competitive hiring process or, if they qualify, noncompetitively through the use of excepted service appointing options. Excepted service appointing options for hiring people with disabilities were developed to provide an opportunity to people with disabilities to show that they can do the job and to circumvent the attitudinal barriers that managers and supervisors have concerning people with disabilities. It is emphasized that candidates must be able to perform the essential functions of the position with or without reasonable accommodation. There are two ways to hire people with disabilities noncompetitively:

- People with disabilities may be certified as eligible by the state vocational rehabilitation agency or Department of Veterans Affairs. Employees may be converted to competitive status after two successful years of job performance.
- People who are severely disabled may also be hired noncompetitively after completion of a 700-hour appointment. This trial appointment allows people with disabilities to demonstrate their ability to do the job. If successful, employees may convert to a continuing Schedule A appointment without certification.
- Coordination with the agency's Special Placement Programs Coordinator is recommended. <http://www.chcoc.gov/transmittals/TransmittalDetails.aspx?TransmittalID=5333>





VETERANS

VETERANS' RECRUITMENT APPOINTMENT (VRA)

The VRA is a special option by which agencies can, if they wish, appoint an eligible veteran without competition. The candidate does not have to be on a list of eligibles, but must meet the basic qualification requirements for the position. The VRA is an excepted appointment to a competitive Service position up to the GS-11 level (or equivalent). After two years of satisfactory service, the veteran is converted to a career-conditional appointment in the competitive Service.

VETERANS' EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY ACT (VEOA)

When an agency accepts applications from outside the Department of Defense, the Veterans' Employment Opportunity Act of 1998 (VEOA) allows eligible veterans to compete for these vacancies under merit promotion procedures. Veterans who are selected may be appointed at any level and are given career or career conditional appointments in the competitive Service.

30% OR MORE DISABLED VETERANS

Veterans who have a current notice of a Service-connected compensable disability of 30% or more from the Veterans Administration may be appointed at any level and without competition. The disabled veteran is appointed to a temporary position lasting longer than 60 days or to a term position. The employee may then be converted without competition to a career or career conditional appointment at any time during his or her temporary or term appointment.

WOUNDED WARRIORS

Wounded warriors may be appointed under the provisions of 30% or more Disabled Veterans, VEOA, VRA or people with disabilities. If you are interested in hiring a wounded warrior, contact your HR professional who will connect you with your Component's Wounded Warriors Program Office.



SPECIAL EXTERNAL HIRING OPTIONS

STUDENTS

THE PATHWAYS PROGRAM

The Pathways Programs were established by Executive Order (E.O.) 13562 to provide clear paths to Federal Internships and potential careers in the Federal government for students and recent graduates. The Pathways Programs consist of the Presidential Management Fellows (PMF) Program, the Pathways Internship Program, and the Recent Graduates Program. Contact your organization's Pathways Programs Coordinator for more information on these options.

INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

The Internship Program is for current students and individuals accepted for enrollment in a qualifying educational program. The Internship Program provides students enrolled in a variety of educational institutions with paid opportunities to work in agencies and explore Federal careers while still in school.

RECENT GRADUATES PROGRAM

This program targets individuals who have graduated recently from qualifying educational institutions or programs. To be eligible, applicants must apply within 2 years of degree or certificate completion, except for veterans precluded from doing so due to their military service obligation, who have up to 6 years after degree or certificate completion. Successful applicants are placed in a dynamic, career development program.

PRESIDENTIAL MANAGEMENT FELLOWS PROGRAM

For more than three decades, the PMF Program has been the Federal Government's premier leadership development program for advanced degree candidates, including those in STEM disciplines. E.O. 13562 expands the eligibility window for applicants, making it more "student friendly" by aligning it with academic calendars and allowing those who have received a qualifying advanced degree within the preceding 2 years to participate.

**OTHER EXTERNAL HIRING OPTIONS****DELEGATED EXAMINING**

The competitive hiring process (i.e., competitive examining/category rating) is open to all U.S. applicants. Requires public notice and application of veterans' preference. Eligibles are rated and ranked according to quality categories. Selections may only be made from the highest quality category. Appointments to the competitive service may be temporary, term, or permanent. This hiring option allows you to fill temporary, term or permanent vacancies where the source of applicants is generally candidates who are non-federal or cannot be appointed under any other method.

- The servicing HR office has Delegated Examining Authority for GS and FWS positions to issue individual announcements that are open to the general public.
- Candidates are certified under quality category ranking procedures, with veterans receiving preference within a quality category. Generally, all veterans in the same quality category as non-veterans must be selected before consideration may be given to a non-veteran. Provisions are available for valid requests for passing over of veterans.
- Your HR professional can advise you of your selection options when the certificate is issued from the servicing HR office.

ADMINISTRATIVE CAREERS WITH AMERICA (ACWA) OPTION

ACWA is a recruitment source or examination program available through OPM. ACWA program provides for entry-level hiring at the GS-05 and GS-07 level in a large number of professional and administrative occupations. ACWA is authorized under the terms of a consent decree (Luevano vs. Lachance) and can only be used for specific series and job titles. Consult with your HR professional for more information.

OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT (OPM) SHARED CASE EXAMINING

With prior approval from your DoD Component and when delegated examining or does not meet the recruitment needs, you may be able to use OPM services. These services would be paid for by the manager and used to fill temporary, term or permanent positions through vacancy announcements which are open to the general public. The same rules governing veterans that applies to Delegated Examining certificates applies to certificates issued from OPM under this method.



REINSTATEMENT ELIGIBLES

Re-employment of former federal government employees. Individuals with reinstatement rights may be noncompetitively placed in positions at grades or pay bands equal to or lower than the grade or pay band previously held. Filling a position with a reinstatement eligible can be a quick method of filling a position, especially when the supervisor is able to name request an individual with previous experience. Reinstatement eligibles may also compete with merit promotion candidates for positions at higher grades or pay bands than they previously held. Provisions may apply with respect to recruiting from outside the agency's workforce (e.g., VEOA, ICTAP, RPL).

RE-EMPLOYED ANNUITANTS

An annuitant under either the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) or Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) may be employed in any position for which he or she is qualified. With prior approval from your DoD Component, re-employed annuitants may be hired on a temporary or indefinite basis. An annuitant whose retirement was not based upon disability will continue to receive his or her full retirement annuity and salary during re-employment. Employment of annuitants is beneficial to management in that it provides a readily available source of highly qualified candidates to meet critical mission needs (e.g., for a position that is hard to fill, a position that is critical to accomplish the organization's mission, when the annuitant has unique or specialized skills or unusual qualifications or to mentor less experienced employees and/or provide continuity during critical organizational transitions). Some restrictions apply to rehiring civilian employees who received Department of Defense (DoD) separation incentives. Reemployed annuitants serve at the will of the appointing official. As with reinstatement eligibles, provisions may apply with respect to recruiting from outside the agency's workforce (e.g., VEOA, ICTAP, RPL).





INTERCHANGE AGREEMENTS

Agreements exist between agencies to allow employees to move from the excepted Service to the competitive Service. Interchange agreements exist with:

- Department of Defense Non-Appropriated Fund
effective 9/20/91; extended indefinitely
- Department of Homeland Security, Transportation and Security Administration
effective 1/31/13; expires 1/31/18
- Veterans Health Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs
effective 10/31/79 and 5/12/87; extended indefinitely
- Federal Aviation Administration
effective 11/6/97; expires 12/31/17
- Tennessee Valley Authority
effective 10/16/57; extended indefinitely
- Nuclear Regulatory Commission
effective 10/1/75; extended indefinitely
- Corporation for National and Community Service
This agreement includes employees assigned to the Office of the Inspector General (OIG). *effective 3/4/13; expires 3/05/19*



OTHER EXTERNAL HIRING OPTIONS

TERM APPOINTMENT

Term appointments are usually for work of a project nature, where there is uncertainty of future funding, or where a function is scheduled for contracting out or abolishment. An individual may be hired to perform work that is expected to last for more than one year, but no longer than four years (under GS and FWS).

TEMPORARY APPOINTMENT

Temporary appointments are usually for meeting a temporary workload peak, completing a project, or meeting a staffing need that is going to be terminated by contracting out or abolishment. An individual may be hired to perform work that is expected to be up to one year, but no longer than two years (under GS and FWS). The initial appointment may be no longer than one year, but may be extended one additional year. Temporary appointments extended beyond a total of two years must be approved by OPM.

EXPERT OR CONSULTANT APPOINTMENTS

- Experts and consultants may be appointed on an intermittent, part-time, or full-time work schedule basis as a legitimate and economical way to obtain highly specialized services to positions that primarily require performance of advisory services, rather than performance of operating functions, without regard to competitive civil service requirements.
- A manager may use expert and consultant appointments for individuals awaiting final action on a Presidential appointment, but not yet confirmed. The individual and the work assigned must comply with the expert or consultant requirements in 5 CFR, part 304 and 551.
- Agencies may not use expert and consultant appointments to avoid employment procedures or solely in anticipation of a competitive appointment.
- An expert and consultant appointment authority may not be used to fill positions in the Senior Executive Service (SES). However, if a position meets the criteria for placement in the SES, OPM may authorize a limited appointment authority to appoint an individual during the transition period.
(<http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/ai002p.pdf>)

NOTE* On July 15, 2013, President Obama signed a Presidential Memorandum entitled, "Expanding National Service Through Partnerships to Advance Government Priorities." The memorandum directed OPM to develop and issue guidance regarding strategies to help agencies recruit individuals who have participated in national service programs into the Federal workforce. Agencies may use existing hiring authorities to appoint national service participants to Federal positions. These authorities include non-competitive eligibility for returning Peace Corps and Volunteers In Service to America (VISTA) volunteers. See the OPM website for a complete listing of hiring authorities and the new Recruitment Policy Studio available on HRU.gov (registration required).



CRITICAL EXTERNAL HIRING OPTIONS

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) may approve specific direct hire options for filling temporary, term or permanent positions in response to a severe shortage of candidates or a critical hiring need. Use of a direct hire option expedites the recruitment process by enabling a job offer to be made to a candidate at a recruitment event, such as a job fair, as long as the servicing HR office has an open vacancy announcement for the occupation and there are no candidates under a mandatory placement program, such as the Priority Placement Program. Depending on the specific direct hire option, veterans' preference may apply.

DIRECT HIRE OPTION

When there is a severe shortage of candidates or a critical hiring need, OPM may approve specific direct-hire options for filling temporary, term, or permanent positions.

Using a direct-hire option expedites the recruitment process by enabling a job offer to be made to a qualified candidate at a recruitment event, such as a job fair, as long as the servicing HR office has an open vacancy announcement for the occupation and there are no candidates under a mandatory placement program, such as the Priority Placement Program.

GOVERNMENT-WIDE DIRECT-HIRE AUTHORITIES

MEDICAL OCCUPATIONS

The occupations covered under this direct-hire option are Medical Officer, GS-602; Nurse, GS-610 and GS-620; Pharmacist, GS-660; and Diagnostic Radiologic Technologist, GS-647.

effective 6/20/03; no expiration date

Veterinary Medical Officers at the GS-11 through GS-15 grade levels nationwide to include overseas territories and commonwealths including Puerto Rico, Guam, and Virgin Islands.

effective 2/12/09; no expiration date

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT (INFORMATION SECURITY) GS-2210 POSITIONS

This option is for positions at or above the GS-9 level in support of government-wide efforts to carry out the requirements of the Government Information Security Reform Act and the Federal Information Security Management Act.

effective 6/20/03; no expiration date



CRITICAL EXTERNAL HIRING OPTIONS

DOD EXPEDITED HIRE AUTHORITY FOR SHORTAGE CATEGORY AND/OR CRITICAL NEED HEALTH CARE OCCUPATIONS

MEDICAL OCCUPATIONS

Medical Occupations covered under this option are Physicians, Dentists, Podiatrists, Optometrists, Nurses, Physicians Assistants, Expanded-Function Dental Auxiliaries, Chiropractors, Pharmacists, Audiologists, Psychologists, Social Workers, Orthotists, Prothetists, Occupational Therapists, Physical Therapists, Rehabilitation Therapists, Respiratory Therapists, Speech Pathologists, Dieticians, Nutritionists, Industrial Hygienists, Psychology Technicians, Social Services Assistants, Practical Nurses, Nursing Assistants, Dental Hygienists, Cytotechnologist, EMT/Paramedic, Nuclear Medicine Technician, Medical Technologist, Medical Technician, Diagnostic Radiologic Technologist, Therapeutic Radiologic Technologist, Medical Instrument Technician, Pharmacy Technician, Medical Records Administrator, Health System Specialist, Medical Records Technician, Dental Laboratory Aid & Technician, Veterinarian, Bioengineer, and Biomedical Engineer.

EXPEDITED HIRING OPTION

ACQUISITION POSITIONS

GS-05 through GS-15 and comparable levels in the following Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA) career fields: Auditing (AUD); Business, Cost Estimating, Financial Management (BCEFM); Contracting (CON); Facilities Engineering (FE); Information Technology (IT); Life Cycle Logistics (LCL); Production, Quality and Manufacturing (PQM); Program Management (PM); Quality Control and Assurance (QA); Science and Technology Management (S&T); System Planning, Research, Development, Engineering and Testing (SPRDE); and Test and Evaluation (T&E). When filling two-grade interval professional and administrative positions at the GS-05 or GS-07 level (or equivalent) with promotion potential of GS-09 or higher, DoD Components must use the Administrative Careers With America (ACWA) assessment or other valid assessment for such positions identified in Appendix D of the OPM Delegated Examining Operations Handbook (DEOH). When using assessments other than ACWA, such assessments must comply with the requirements in 5 CFR part 300, DEOH Chapter Section C, and be consistent with the technical standards in the Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures (see 29 CFR part 1607). USA Hire standard assessments approved as alternatives to the ACWA written exam and rating schedule may also be used.

OPM DIRECT HIRE AUTHORITIES

<http://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/hiring-authorities/direct-hire-authority/#url=Overview>

