



UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT
Washington, DC 20415

The Director

MEMORANDUM

TO: Heads and Acting Heads of Departments and Agencies
FROM: Charles Ezell, Acting Director, U.S. Office of Personnel Management
DATE: February 5, 2025
RE: Maintaining the Integrity of the Career Senior Executive Service

Pursuant to the January 20, 2025, Presidential Memorandum entitled *Restoring Accountability for Career Senior Executives*, and the Executive Order entitled *Restoring Accountability to Policy-Influencing Positions Within the Federal Workforce*, it is clear government-wide policy that “[a]ccountability is essential for all Federal employees, but it is especially important for those who are in policy-influencing positions.”

The White House has received reports that, towards the end of the prior administration, agencies redesignated Senior Executive Service (SES) positions traditionally held by a noncareer appointee, from “general” to “career reserved”, meaning they can only be held by career employees.

Positions that, in the first Trump administration, were seen as appropriately held by noncareer appointees, or by either career or noncareer appointees, should retain that status under the current administration. Congress was clear that a SES “position shall be designated as a career reserved position *only* if the filling of the position by a career appointee is *necessary* to ensure the impartiality, or the public’s confidence in the impartiality, of the Government.” 5 U.S.C. § 3132(b)(1) (emphasis added). Limiting the managerial flexibility of agency heads or the President over a class of officials defined by their “exercise [of] important policy-making, policy-determining, or other executive functions,” 5 U.S.C. § 3132(a)(2)(E), raises serious constitutional concerns.

Review and Reclassification of Positions: Each agency head should take the following actions:

1. Promptly identify all agency SES positions that were either (a) general designated SES positions on January 19, 2021; or (b) were general designated SES positions filled by noncareer appointments for a majority of the prior administration’s tenure.
2. With respect to SES positions described in paragraph (1) that were designated as general and have been redesignated as career reserved, each agency head should promptly take all necessary actions to revert such positions back to the general designation, except with

respect to any specific positions that the agency head requests should remain as career reserved positions pursuant to paragraph (3).

3. Within 45 days of the date of this memorandum each agency head should report the positions identified in the review prescribed by paragraph (1) (or those positions in the process of being redesignated), to the Office of Personnel Management (“*OPM*”) at allocation-management@opm.gov. If an agency head believes that the President’s goals and priorities would be better served by keeping any such positions as career reserved positions, the agency head shall submit a request to retain the specific position as a designated career reserved position and explain the reasons therefore. Agency heads will send the request and explanation to OPM at allocation-management@opm.gov.
4. Agencies shall coordinate with OPM to implement these actions, and request support including (a) identifying agency SES positions redesignated from general to career reserved after January, 19, 2021, (b) consultations regarding appropriate procedures for reassignments, pursuant to [5 U.S.C. 3395](#), and/or details, pursuant to [5 CFR 317.903](#), should an agency head determine such movement of a career executive is warranted to support the agency’s mission , and, (c) any necessary guidance regarding implementation of paragraph (1), (2), and (3).

Please do not hesitate to contact OPM if you have any questions regarding this matter at allocation-management@opm.gov.

cc: Chief Human Capital Officers (CHCOs), Deputy CHCOs, Human Resources Directors, and Chiefs of Staff