

**§ 304.101 Coverage.**

These regulations apply to the appointment of experts and consultants as Federal employees under 5 U.S.C. 3109. They do not apply to the appointments of experts and consultants under other employment authorities or to the procurement of services by contracts under the procurement laws.

**§ 304.102 Definitions.**

For purposes of this part:

(a) An *agency* is an executive department, a military department, or an independent agency.

(b) A *consultant* is a person who can provide valuable and pertinent advice generally drawn from a high degree of broad administrative, professional, or technical knowledge or experience. When an agency requires public advisory participation, a consultant also may be a person who is affected by a particular program and can provide useful views from personal experience.

(c) A *consultant position* is one that requires providing advice, views, opinions, alternatives, or recommendations on a temporary and/or intermittent basis on issues, problems, or questions presented by a Federal official.

(d) An *expert* is a person who is specially qualified by education and experience to perform difficult and challenging tasks in a particular field beyond the usual range of achievement of competent persons in that field. An expert is regarded by other persons in the field as an authority or practitioner of unusual competence and skill in a professional, scientific, technical or other activity.

(e) An *expert position* is one that requires the services of a specialist with skills superior to those of others in the same profession, occupation, or activity to perform work on a temporary and/or intermittent basis assigned by a Federal official. For example, a microbial contamination specialist may apply new test methods to identify bacteria on products, a computer scientist may adapt advanced methods to develop a complex software system, or a plate maker may engrave a novel design.

(f) *Intermittent employment*, as defined in part 340, subpart D, of this chapter,

means employment without a regularly scheduled tour of duty.

(g) *Temporary employment* means employment not to exceed 1 year. An expert or consultant serving under a temporary appointment may have a full-time, part-time, seasonal, or intermittent work schedule.

(h) Employment *without compensation* means unpaid service that is provided at the agency's request and is to perform duties that are unclassified. It is not volunteer service.

**§ 304.103 Authority.**

(a) *Basic authority.* (1) When authorized by an appropriation or other statute to use 5 U.S.C. 3109, an agency may appoint a qualified expert or consultant to an expert or consultant position that requires only intermittent and/or temporary employment. Such an appointment is excepted from competitive examination, position classification, and the General Schedule pay rates.

(2) An expert or consultant who works on a strictly intermittent basis may be appointed under this authority without time limit or for any period determined by the agency. All other experts and consultants must receive temporary appointments. Temporary experts and consultants may be reappointed in the same agency only as provided in paragraph (c) of this section.

(b) *Inappropriate use.* An agency must not use 5 U.S.C. 3109 to appoint an expert or consultant:

(1) To a position requiring Presidential appointment. However, subject to the conditions of this part, an agency may appoint an individual awaiting final action on a Presidential appointment to an expert or consultant position.

(2) To a Senior Executive Service position (including an FBI or DEA Senior Executive Service position).

(3) To perform managerial or supervisory work (although an expert may act as team leader or director of the specific project for which he/she is hired), to make final decisions on substantive policies, or to otherwise function in the agency chain of command (e.g., to approve financial transactions, personnel actions, etc.).

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(4) To do work performed by the agency's regular employees.

(5) To fill in during staff shortages.

(6) Solely in anticipation of giving that individual a career appointment. However, subject to the conditions of this part, an agency may appoint an individual to an expert or consultant position pending Schedule C appointment or noncareer appointment in the Senior Executive Service.

(c) *Reappointment.* An agency may reemploy an expert or consultant to perform demonstrably different duties without regard to the length of that individual's previous expert or consultant service with the agency. Reappointment to perform substantially the same duties is subject to the following limits:

(1) An agency may employ an expert or consultant who works on a full-time basis for a maximum of 2 years—*i.e.*, on an initial appointment not to exceed 1 year and a reappointment not to exceed 1 additional year.

(2) An agency may reappoint an expert or consultant who works on a part-time or intermittent schedule in accordance with one of the following options. The agency must determine which option it will use in advance of any reappointment and must base its determination on objective criteria (e.g., nature of duties, pay level, whether or not work is regularly scheduled). Option 1 must be applied to reappointments of experts and consultants appointed without compensation.

(i) *Option 1—Annual service.* An agency may reappoint an expert or consultant, with no limit on the number of reappointments, as long as the individual is paid for no more than 6 months (130 days or 1,040 hours) of work, or works for no more than that amount of time without compensation, in a service year. (The service year is the calendar year that begins on the date of the individual's initial appointment in the agency.) An expert or consultant who exceeds this limit in his/her first service year may be reappointed for 1 additional year. An expert or consultant who exceeds the limit during any subsequent service year may not be reappointed thereafter.

(ii) *Option 2—Cumulative earnings.* Each expert or consultant will have a

lifetime limit of twice the maximum annual rate payable under the annualized basic pay limitations of section 304.105. The agency may adjust this limit to reflect statutory increases in basic pay rates. The agency may reappoint an expert or consultant until his/her total earnings from expert or consultant employment with the agency reach the lifetime maximum, as determined by using the applicable maximum salary rate. At that point, the employment must be terminated.

(3) OPM may authorize reappointment of an expert or consultant as an exception to the limits in the section when necessitated by unforeseen and unusual circumstances.

### § 304.104 Determining rate of pay.

(a) The rate of basic pay for experts and consultants is set by administrative action. The head of an agency, or his or her designee, must determine the appropriate rate of basic pay on an hourly or daily basis, subject to the limitations described in section 304.105.

(b) The head of an agency, or his or her designee, shall consider the following factors in setting the initial rate of basic pay for an expert or consultant:

(1) The level and difficulty of the work to be performed;

(2) The qualifications of the expert or consultant;

(3) The pay rates of comparable individuals performing similar work in Federal or non-Federal sectors; and

(4) The availability of qualified candidates.

(c) An expert or consultant appointed under 5 U.S.C. 3109 may be employed without pay, provided the individual agrees in advance in writing to waive any claim for compensation for those services.

### § 304.105 Daily and biweekly basic pay limitations.

(a) Unless specifically authorized by an appropriation or other statute, agencies subject to chapter 51 and subchapter III of chapter 53 of title 5, United States Code, may not pay for any 1 day an aggregate amount of pay (including basic pay, locality pay under subpart F of part 531 of this chapter, and premium pay under subpart A of