

### § 351.403

### 5 CFR Ch. I (1–1–10 Edition)

(b) of this section includes pay band positions and positions not covered by a pay band, the agency may, at its discretion, define a separate (and additional) competitive area, otherwise consistent with paragraph (b) of this section, to include only pay band positions. The original competitive area would then include only the remaining positions (*i.e.*, those positions not covered by a pay band).

[51 FR 319 Jan. 3, 1986, as amended at 56 FR 65416, Dec. 17, 1991; 62 FR 62500, Nov. 24, 1997; 73 FR 46532, Aug. 11, 2008]

#### § 351.403 Competitive level.

(a)(1) Each agency shall establish competitive levels consisting of all positions in a competitive area which are in the same grade (or occupational level) and classification series, and which are similar enough in duties, qualification requirements, pay schedules, and working conditions so that an agency may reassign the incumbent of one position to any of the other positions in the level without undue interruption.

(2)(i) Except as provided in paragraph (a)(2)(ii) of this section for pay band positions, competitive level determinations are based on each employee's official position of record (including the official position description), not the employee's personal qualifications.

(ii) To establish a competitive level comprised of pay band positions, an agency may supplement an employee's official position of record with other applicable records that document the employee's actual duties and responsibilities.

(3) Sex may not be the basis for a competitive level determination, except for a position OPM designates that certification of eligibles by sex is justified.

(4) A probationary period required by subpart I of part 315 of this chapter for initial appointment to a supervisory or managerial position is not a basis for establishing a separate competitive level.

(5) If a competitive area includes positions in one or more pay bands, each set of interchangeable positions in the pay band under paragraphs (a)(1) through (4) of this section is a separate competitive level (e.g., with inter-

changeable positions under paragraphs (a)(1) through (4) of this section, each pay band is one competitive level; if the positions are not interchangeable under paragraphs (a)(1) through (4) of this section, the pay band may include multiple competitive levels).

(b) Each agency shall establish separate competitive levels according to the following categories:

(1) *By service.* Separate levels shall be established for positions in the competitive service and in the excepted service.

(2) *By appointment authority.* Separate levels shall be established for excepted service positions filled under different appointment authorities.

(3) *By pay schedule.* Separate levels shall be established for positions under different pay schedules.

(4) *By work schedule.* Separate levels shall be established for positions filled on a full-time, part-time, intermittent, seasonal, or on-call basis. No distinction may be made among employees in the competitive level on the basis of the number of hours or weeks scheduled to be worked.

(5) *By trainee status.* Separate levels shall be established for positions filled by an employee in a formally designated trainee or developmental program having all of the characteristics covered in § 351.702(e)(1) through (e)(4) of this part.

(c) An agency may not establish a competitive level based solely upon:

(1) A difference in the number of hours or weeks scheduled to be worked by other-than-full-time employees who would otherwise be in the same competitive level;

(2) A requirement to work changing shifts;

(3) The grade promotion potential of the position; or

(4) A difference in the local wage areas when a competitive area includes positions covered by more than one wage-board or similar wage-determining procedure;

(5) A difference in locality payments under 5 U.S.C. 5304 and subpart F of part 531 of this chapter when a competitive level includes more than one locality pay area listed in § 531.603 of this chapter; or

## Office of Personnel Management

## § 351.501

(6) Representative rates in different local commuting areas when a competitive area includes General Schedule (GS) and Federal Wage System (FWS) positions in multiple GS locality pay areas, and/or FWS local wage areas.

[51 FR 319, Jan. 3, 1986, as amended at 60 FR 3062, Jan. 13, 1995; 62 FR 62500, Nov. 24, 1997; 73 FR 29338, May 21, 2008; 73 FR 46532, Aug. 11, 2008]

### § 351.404 Retention register.

(a) When a competing employee is to be released from a competitive level under this part, the agency shall establish a separate retention register for that competitive level. The retention register is prepared from the current retention records of employees. Upon displacing another employee under this part, an employee retains the same status and tenure in the new position. Except for an employee on military duty with a restoration right, the agency shall enter on the retention register, in the order of retention standing, the name of each competing employee who is:

- (1) In the competitive level;
- (2) Temporarily promoted from the competitive level by temporary or term promotion; or
- (3) Detailed from the competitive level under 5 U.S.C. 3341 or other appropriate authority.

(b)(1) The name of each employee serving under a time limited appointment or promotion to a position in a competitive level shall be entered on a list apart from the retention register for that competitive level, along with the expiration date of the action.

(2) The agency shall list, at the bottom of the list prepared under paragraph (b)(1) of this section, the name of each employee in the competitive level with a written decision of removal under part 432 or 752 of this chapter.

[51 FR 319, Jan. 3, 1986, as amended at 62 FR 62500, Nov. 24, 1997]

### § 351.405 Demoted employees.

An employee who has received a written decision under part 432 or 752 of this chapter to demote him or her competes under this part from the position

to which he or she will be or has been demoted.

[62 FR 62500, Nov. 24, 1997]

## Subpart E—Retention Standing

### § 351.501 Order of retention—competitive service.

(a) Competing employees shall be classified on a retention register on the basis of their tenure of employment, veteran preference, length of service, and performance in descending order as follows:

(1) By tenure group I, group II, group III; and

(2) Within each group by veteran preference subgroup AD, subgroup A, subgroup B; and

(3) Within each subgroup by years of service as augmented by credit for performance under § 351.504, beginning with the earliest service date.

(b) Groups are defined as follows:

(1) Group I includes each career employee who is not serving a probationary period. (A supervisory or managerial employee serving a probationary period required by subpart I of part 315 of this title is in group I if the employee is otherwise eligible to be included in this group.) The following employees are in group I as soon as the employee completes any required probationary period for initial appointment:

(i) An employee for whom substantial evidence exists of eligibility to immediately acquire status and career tenure, and whose case is pending final resolution by OPM (including cases under Executive Order 10826 to correct certain administrative errors);

(ii) An employee who acquires competitive status and satisfies the service requirement for career tenure when the employee's position is brought into the competitive service;

(iii) An administrative law judge;

(iv) An employee appointed under 5 U.S.C. 3104, which provides for the employment of specially qualified scientific or professional personnel, or a similar authority; and

(v) An employee who acquires status under 5 U.S.C. 3304(c) on transfer to the competitive service from the legislative or judicial branches of the Federal Government.