§ 451.303 Restrictions.

(a) Governmentwide limitations—SES. During any fiscal year—

(1) The number of career SES appointees awarded the rank of Meritorious Executive may not exceed 5 percent of the career SES; and

(2) The number of career SES appointees awarded the rank of Distinguished Executive may not exceed 1 percent of the career SES.

(b) Governmentwide limitations—Senior career employees. During any fiscal year—

(1) The number of senior career employees awarded the rank of Meritorious Senior Professional may not exceed 5 percent of the total number of career appointees to OPM-allocated Senior-Level (SL) and Scientific-Professional (ST) positions; and

(2) The number of senior career employees awarded the rank of Distinguished Senior Professional may not exceed 1 percent of the total number of career appointees to OPM-allocated Senior-Level (SL) and Scientific-Professional (ST) positions.

(c) Frequency of awards. Individuals awarded a Distinguished or Meritorious rank under this subpart shall not be entitled to be awarded that rank during the following 4 fiscal years.

§ 451.304 Payment of Rank Awards.

(a) Receipt of the Distinguished rank by an SES career appointee or a senior career employee entitles the individual to a lump-sum payment of an amount equal to 35 percent of annual basic pay, which shall be in addition to the basic pay paid under 5 U.S.C. 5376 or 5382, or any award paid under 5 U.S.C. 5384.

(b) Receipt of the Meritorious rank by an SES career appointee or a senior career employee entitles such individual to a lump-sum payment of an amount equal to 20 percent of annual basic pay, which shall be in addition to the basic pay paid under 5 U.S.C. 5376 or 5382, or any award paid under 5 U.S.C. 5384.

(c) Payment of rank awards must comply with the restrictions on annual aggregate compensation at 5 U.S.C. 5307.


(a) Annually, OPM shall establish criteria, including terms, conditions, and evaluation factors, for rank award nominations, in consultation with agencies and other stakeholders. Agencies shall nominate individuals for rank awards in accordance with OPM criteria and any other instructions.

(b) Annually, OPM shall review agency recommendations for Presidential Rank Awards for SES career appointees and senior career employees under 5 U.S.C. 4507 and 4507a, and recommend to the President which of those individuals should receive rank awards.