On June 26, 2013, the Supreme Court ruled that Section 3 of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) is unconstitutional. As a result of the Supreme Court's decision, the United States Office of Personnel Management (OPM) will now be able to extend certain benefits to Federal employees and annuitants who have legally married a spouse of the same sex, regardless of the employee's or annuitant's state of residency. OPM is currently in the process of updating and revising the website to reflect this change, and will be updating this information as soon as possible. Please check back in the coming weeks for updates.

Delegated Examining Operations Handbook:

A Guide for Federal Agency Examining Offices

May 2007

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Introduction

Purpose of the Delegated Examining Operations Handbook (DEOH)

The Delegated Examining Operations Handbook (DEOH) is designed to provide assistance to agencies with delegated examining authority granted under section 1104 of title 5, United States Code (U.S.C.).

This DEOH applies to competitive examining only and not merit promotion, excepted service, senior executive service, or non-competitive service (see 5 U.S.C. § 1104). It provides agencies with guidance, options, and, where necessary, specific operational procedures that are designed to ensure that examining programs comply with merit system laws and regulations.

Audience

Although OPM delegates examining authority at the agency headquarters level, agencies may assign examining responsibilities to subordinate offices, which serve as "delegated examining offices" (DEOs).

This DEOH is designed primarily for:

- Delegated examining staff;
- Test Administrators;
- Test Control Officers; and
- Human resources offices.

Materials needed

Use this DEOH in conjunction with:

- Specific authorities cited in the agency's delegation agreement;
- Applicable laws in title 5, United States Code; and
- Regulations published in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR).

(While the information in this DEOH is current as of the date of issue, any changes in regulation or law will supersede the information in this DEOH.)

How the DEOH is organized

We have organized this DEOH in a manner that corresponds to the examining process, starting with recruitment planning and finishing with issuing and auditing certificates.

To help you understand the examining process and the organization of this DEOH, we have provided a flow chart outlining the major steps of the process (see next page). The main headings of the flow chart (outlined in red) reflect the major steps of the examining process. These major steps are:

- Identifying the job and its assessments (Chapter 2);
- Recruiting and announcing the job (Chapter 3);
- Accepting and reviewing applications (Chapter 4);
- Assessing applicants (Chapter 5); and
- Certifying eligibles (Chapter 6).

Pledge to Applicants

Performing delegated examining activities properly is one step in fulfilling the "Pledge to Applicants".

OPM and the Partnership for Public Service recognize that a Government's most important asset is its people. To attract talented people to the service of the Nation, we believe the application process should enable rather than deter job seekers. To that end, we will work to ensure a process that reflects these principles.

1. A user-friendly application process that is not unduly burdensome or time consuming.
2. Clear, understandable job announcements and instructions for applying.
3. Timely and informed responses to questions about the requirements and the process.
4. Prompt acknowledgement that their application has been received.
5. Regular updates on the status of their applications as significant decisions are reached.
6. A timely decision-making process.

Competitive Examining Process Flow Chart

Identify Job and Assessments	→	Review Hiring Flexibilities	→	Conduct Job Analysis and Identify Competencies/KSAs	→	Identify Assessment Tools	→	Submit Request to Delegated Examining Office

Recruit and Announce Job	→	Recruit	→	Create a Job Announcement	→	Satisfy Public Notice Requirements

Notify Applicants

Accept and Review Applications → Review for: Age, Citizenship, ICTAP/CTAP, Veterans' Preference and Other Requirements — Yes → Qualifications Review

No → Notify Applicants

No

Yes

Assess Applicants → Rate and Rank (Including Veterans' Preference) → Case Examining / Competitor Inventory

Certify Eligibles → Put Eligibles in Order of Selection (Apply Veterans' Preference) → Issue Certificate → **Select** → Audit (Verification)

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*Major steps in the competitive examining process are identified in red.

Chapter 1 – OPM and Agency Responsibilities

This chapter describes the responsibilities that are typically outlined in Interagency Delegated Examining Agreements between OPM and agencies. This chapter contains the following sections:

Section A	What is Delegated Examining Authority?
Section B	OPM Responsibilities
Section C	Agency Responsibilities
Section D	Delegated Examining Training Responsibilities
Section E	References

Section A - What is Delegated Examining Authority?

What is delegated examining authority?

Delegated examining authority is an authority OPM grants to agencies to fill competitive civil service jobs with:

- Applicants applying from outside the Federal workforce,
- Federal employees who do not have competitive service status, or
- Federal employees with competitive service status.

Appointments made by agencies through delegated examining authority are subject to civil service laws and regulations. This is to ensure fair and open competition, recruitment from all segments of society, and selection on the basis of the applicants' competencies or knowledge, skills, and abilities (see 5 U.S.C. § 2301).

What does delegated examining cover?

Under 5 U.S.C. § 1104, OPM delegated to agencies the authority to conduct competitive examinations for positions in the competitive service, except for administrative law judge positions.

How to obtain delegated examining authority.

To obtain the authority to conduct delegated examining for competitive service positions, your agency must enter into a signed agreement with OPM (5 U.S.C. § 1104). The four steps to obtaining delegated examining authority are:

Step 1: The agency headquarters contacts OPM's Strategic Human Resources Policy Division and requests delegated examining authority.

Step 2: OPM drafts a delegated examining agreement for both parties to sign (see Appendix A for Sample Interagency Delegated Examining Agreement).

Step 3: OPM and the agency HR Director sign the agreement.

Step 4: OPM trains the agency personnel who will operate the delegated examining office(s).

How delegated examining authority is terminated, suspended, or revoked.

Your delegated examining authority may be terminated by either OPM or your agency with 90 days advance notice. OPM may suspend or revoke certification of your delegated examining office at any time, with or without advance notice.

For more information see Appendix A for a sample of the standard Interagency Delegated Examining Agreement.

Section B - OPM Responsibilities

Training, guidance, and technical assistance

OPM is responsible for providing you with:

- Training, guidance, and oversight in the conduct of delegated examining activities;
- Certification for the people you have identified to conduct examining operations;
- Periodic recertification training; and
- Operating guidelines and basic technical assistance.

Medical and qualifications objections

Notwithstanding any delegation of authority to your agency, OPM retains exclusive authority to:

- Make medical qualifications determinations pertaining to preference eligibles (5 CFR part 339); and
- Grant or deny an agency's pass over request of a preference eligible with a compensable service-connected disability of 30% or more. (5 U.S.C. § 3318). See Chapter 6, Section D for more information on objections and pass overs.

Job information

OPM provides job seekers with up-to-date information about job opportunities and application procedures through USAJOBS (see www.opm.gov).

Oversight

OPM maintains an oversight program to ensure that all delegated examining activities, including work that is performed by contractors, are conducted in accordance with merit system principles and the standards established under 5 U.S.C. § 1104 (b)(1).

If we determine that an activity is not being performed in accordance with applicable laws, rules, regulations, or standards, we will require your agency to take corrective action (see 5 U.S.C. § 1104 (c)).

Section C - Agency Responsibilities

Fundamental responsibilities

A delegated examining office has two fundamental responsibilities:

1. To ensure that the agency's vacant positions are filled with the best-qualified persons from a sufficient pool of well-qualified eligibles; and
2. To uphold the laws, regulations, and policies of merit selection (see 5 U.S.C. §§ 2301 and 2302).

Recruitment and public notice

The merit system requires you to give members of the public an opportunity to compete for most vacant positions. Therefore, when you are filling a job through delegated examining, you must:

- Recruit enough well-qualified applicants to ensure adequate competition for competitive service positions (see Chapter 3);
- Provide public notice of the opportunity to compete by listing all job announcements on USAJOBS (see 5 U.S.C. §§ 3327 and 3330);
- Provide a suitable job announcement and an appropriate open period for receipt of applications, considering:
  - The nature of the position(s) to be covered by the job announcement,
  - The promotion potential associated with the position(s), and
  - The characteristics of the relevant labor market (see Chapter 3);
- Specify filing instructions and conditions clearly in the job announcement (see Chapter 3); and
- Justify an open period of less than five calendar days by documenting your rationale in the examination file (see Chapter 3).

Establishing an agency policy on accepting and processing applications

Your agency headquarters should establish agencywide policies and procedures for accepting and processing applications from all applicants, including status applicants, and clearly specify filing instructions and conditions in the job announcement (see Chapter 4, Section A).

Assessment instruments

You must develop assessment instruments in accordance with 5 CFR part 300 (see Chapter 2, Section C).

Forms

You are responsible for acquiring and maintaining adequate supplies of the forms necessary for conducting examining operations. You may order standard and optional forms through your normal procurement process.

You may also use automated documentation methods in lieu of written documentation, or design and print your own forms. However, you must clear any form that collects information directly from the public with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) (see 5 CFR part 1320 and OMB 83-I, *Paperwork Reduction Act Submission*)*.*

Rating and ranking applications

You are responsible for:

- Screening for minimum qualifications,
- Rating applications,
- Ranking eligibles based on their ratings,
- Applying veterans' preference, and
- Notifying the applicants of the status of their applications.

Administering and scoring written tests

You are responsible for administering and scoring written tests. Individuals who administer OPM tests must be trained and certified by OPM. You may contract with OPM or another certified contractor to administer and score OPM tests on a reimbursable basis.

If you decide to use a certified contractor, we suggest you look at the "Vendor Criteria List" (see Appendix B).   This list provides the types of information you should request from the contractor before entering into a contractual agreement.

The Vendor Criteria List in Appendix B is by no means an exhaustive list of questions, it is simply a starting point for you to consider when choosing a contractor to administer and score your written tests.

Applying Veterans' Preference

You must apply the veterans' preference provisions of title 5, United States Code, including:

- 5 U.S.C. § 3305 (competitive service; examinations; when held);
- 5 U.S.C. § 3309 (preference eligibles; examinations; additional points for);
- 5 U.S.C. § 3310 (preference eligibles; examinations; guards; elevator operators; messengers and custodians);
- 5 U.S.C. § 3311 (preference eligibles; examinations; crediting experience);
- 5 U.S.C. § 3312 (preference eligibles; physical qualifications; waivers);
- 5 U.S.C. § 3313 (competitive service; registers of eligibles);
- 5 U.S.C. § 3314 (registers; preference eligibles who resigned);
- 5 U.S.C. § 3315 (registers; preference eligibles furloughed or separated);
- 5 U.S.C. § 3316 (preference eligibles; reinstatement);
- 5 U.S.C. § 3317 (competitive service; certification from registers);
- 5 U.S.C. § 3318 (competitive service; selection from certificates); and
- 5 U.S.C. § 3319 (Alternative ranking and selection procedures).

For more information visit: www.opm.gov/vetguide.

Screening for potential suitability concerns

Under 5 CFR part 731, agencies have the responsibility to screen for and evaluate suitability issues in cases involving applicants for competitive service positions, except the following, which must be referred to OPM:

Cases involving evidence of:
- Material, intentional false statement in examination or appointment, or
- Deception or fraud in examination or appointment; and
- Cases involving refusal to furnish testimony as required by 5 CFR section 5.4.

Note: The agency has the latitude to determine what office within the agency will be responsible for adjudicating suitability issues. This function may be done in the DEO, but is not required to be done there. For further information concerning suitability determinations refer to 5 CFR part 731.

Other determinations

In addition to suitability, you are also responsible for making the following determinations:

- Conversion to career or career-conditional employment (see 5 CFR part 315);
- Exceptions to the time-in-grade restriction (see 5 CFR part 300); and
- Exceptions to the time-after-competitive-appointment restriction (see 5 CFR part 330).

Career transition assistance

You are responsible for recruiting, examining, and referring eligibles in a manner that complies with your agency's Career Transition Assistance Plan and the Interagency Career Transition Assistance Plan (see Chapter 4, Section B).

Requests for Reconsideration

You must establish a procedure through which applicants may request reconsideration of their ratings (see 5 CFR part 300). You may want to consider incorporating this procedure into your agency's administrative grievance or alternative dispute resolution system.

For more detailed information, see Chapter 5, Section C, Establish an Inventory.

Issuing certificates

You are responsible for issuing certificates of eligibles, auditing certificates, and establishing objection/pass over procedures.

OPM, however, retains exclusive authority to:

- Make medical determinations pertaining to preference eligibles (5 CFR part 339); and
- Grant or deny an agency's pass over request of a preference eligible with a compensable service-connected disability of 30% or more. (5 U.S.C. § 3318) See Chapter 6, Section D for more information on objections and pass overs.

Training and certification

You must ensure that individuals responsible for conducting delegated examining activities, including those conducting the annual audits, have completed initial certification training and are currently certified to perform these activities (See Chapter 1, Section D and 5 U.S.C. § 1104).

Accountability

To ensure that your delegated examining activities are in compliance with Federal law and merit system principles (see 5 U.S.C. §§ 1104(b)(1) and 2301), you must:

- Establish an internal accountability system. This internal accountability system is subject to periodic review by OPM.

- Conduct annual self-audits of your delegated examining activities. Such self-audits must be performed by non-DEU staff that have been trained and certified by OPM in delegated examining procedures. In satisfying this requirement, you must:

  - Certify completion of the self-audit to OPM by indicating the date of completion in your quarterly workload report (see Chapter 7); and

  - Maintain a list of all discrepancies and corrective actions for a period of three years after each audit.

- Take any corrective action that OPM may require as a result of periodic review of delegated examining activities, which is conducted by OPM's Human Capital Leadership and Merit Systems Accountability Division, Center for Merit System Accountability.

Reporting and record-keeping

You must comply with the following reporting and record-keeping requirements (see 5 U.S.C. § 1104 (b)(1) and Chapter 7 of this DEOH).

Reporting

You are responsible for:

- Providing OPM with quarterly workload reports summarizing your delegated examining activities (see Chapter 7, Section C);
- Notifying OPM of any changes in your delegated examining program, including the addition or termination of delegated examining offices; and
- Complying with the reporting requirements for the Administrative Careers With America (ACWA) (see Chapter 2, Section A).

Record Keeping

You are responsible for:

- Retaining records in accordance with the DEOH Records Retention and Disposition Schedule (see Appendix C). Appendix C provides specific instructions for disposing of documents associated with delegated examining activities. Appendix C supersedes any previous record-keeping schedule that may have been furnished to a delegated examining office, including any schedule that may have been attached to a delegated examining agreement;

- Ensuring that the records used to implement the delegation of authority are maintained in a manner that is consistent with OPM's Governmentwide system of records (OPM-GOVT-5) and the Privacy Act. Submit requests for changes to the OPM system notices or regulations to:

  Deputy Associate Director
  Center for Talent and Capacity Policy
  U. S. Office of Personnel Management
  1900 E Street, NW, Room 6500
  Washington, DC 20415

- Complying with the data collection requirements for ACWA (see Chapter 2, Section A).

Section D - Delegated Examining Training Responsibilities

Introduction

Together, your agency and OPM have a vested interest in ensuring that employees who perform examining functions are fully knowledgeable about competitive examining procedures. Toward that end, OPM provides comprehensive initial and refresher ("recertification") training to all specialists, assistants, or clerks who are involved in delegated examining activities.

Initial delegated examining training

All employees involved in delegated examining activities must receive initial training from OPM (5 U.S.C. § 1104 (b)(1)). The initial training involves topics such as developing an assessment tool; rating and ranking candidates; adjudicating veterans' preference; and application of the rule of three. Individuals who successfully complete this initial training are certified to perform delegated examining work.

Certification

Certification to conduct delegated examining activities is time-limited. Generally, recertification occurs within three years of the initial training and continues in three-year increments thereafter – although your local OPM Services Branch may establish additional conditions. After an employee's certification expires, he/she must receive refresher training to be re-certified (5 U.S.C. § 1104(b)(1)).

You are responsible for providing the local OPM Services Branch with information describing the training needs and background of your delegated examining staff.

Refresher training

Refresher training is required if you wish to be recertified to conduct delegated examining functions. The training covers any new examining policies, issues related to on veterans' preference, and any problems that may have developed during an internal audit or an OPM conducted audit.

Recommended prerequisites to delegated examining functions

Our experience shows that staff identified for delegated examining work should have one or more of the following to be successful:

- Prior work experience in either Federal competitive staffing or internal merit promotion operations;
- Classroom training providing a knowledge of basic Federal staffing policies, procedures, methods, and techniques; and/or
- Knowledge of Federal personnel management procedures, including applying and following merit system principles.

How to get delegated examining training

Notify your local OPM's Human Capital Leadership and Merit System Accountability Division when your delegated examining staff needs initial or refresher training.

Training needs assessment

Before receiving training, each participant and his or her supervisor should complete a training needs assessment. This assessment determines the individual's level of technical knowledge and identifies specific areas of training to emphasize. OPM's Human Capital Leadership and Merit System Accountability Division will provide the assessment forms.

Section E - References

The following table provides a list of sources pertaining to the topics covered by this section:

Topic	Reference
Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)	5 U.S.C. § 552; 5 CFR part 294
Privacy Act	5 U.S.C. § 552a; 5 CFR part 297
Delegation of authority for personnel management	5 U.S.C. § 1104
Merit System Principles	5 U.S.C. § 2301
Prohibited personnel practices	5 U.S.C. § 2302
Employment of relatives	5 U.S.C. § 3110; 5 CFR part 310
Competitive service; examinations; when held	5 U.S.C. § 3305
Preference eligibles; examinations; additional points for	5 U.S.C. § 3309
Preference eligibles; examinations; crediting experience	5 U.S.C. § 3311
Preference eligibles; physical qualifications; waivers	5 U.S.C. § 3312
Competitive service; registers of eligibles	5 U.S.C. § 3313
Registers; preference eligibles who resigned	5 U.S.C. § 3314
Registers; preference eligibles furloughed or separated	5 U.S.C. § 3315
Preference eligibles; reinstatement	5 U.S.C. § 3316
Competitive service; certification from registers	5 U.S.C. § 3317
Competitive service; selection from certificates	5 U.S.C. § 3318
Alternative ranking and selection procedures	5 U.S.C. § 3319
Civil service; employment service	5 U.S.C § 3327
Governmentwide list of vacant positions	5 U.S.C § 3330
Employment (General)	5 CFR part 300
Career and career conditional appointment	5 CFR part 315
Recruitment, selection, and placement (General)	5 CFR part 330
Examining system	5 CFR part 337
Medical qualification determinations	5 CFR part 339
Suitability	5 CFR part 731
Controlling paperwork burdens on the public	5 CFR part 1320
OPM delegated examining web page	www.opm.gov/deu
Federal Employment Policy Handbook: Veterans and the Civil Service	www.opm.gov/veterans
Interagency agreement for delegated examining authority	Appendix A
Vendor criteria list	Appendix B
Records retention and disposition schedule	Appendix C

Chapter 2 - Identifying the Job and its Assessments

Identifying the job and its assessments is very important in the examining process. This chapter describes the various steps you should take prior to filling your job. This chapter contains the following sections:

Section A - Review Hiring Flexibilities

As you are creating a job announcement, you may want to consider a wide range of hiring flexibilities available to your agency. Taking full advantage of these flexibilities may help you attract the applicants who are best prepared to perform the work that needs to be done. This section will discuss some of the hiring flexibilities that you may consider. For a comprehensive list of appointing authorities, please visit our web site at www.opm.gov.

Temporary Limited Employment

Definition of a temporary appointment

A temporary limited appointment is a non-status appointment to a competitive service position for a specific period not to exceed one year.

Initial appointment

You may make a temporary limited appointment:

1. To fill a job that is not expected to last longer than one (1) year;

2. To meet an employment need that is time limited for reasons such as:

   - Abolishment,
   - Reorganization,
   - Contracting out of the function,
   - Anticipated reduction in funding, or
   - Completion of a specific project or peak workload; or

3. To temporarily fill positions that may be needed for the placement of permanent employees who would otherwise be displaced.

Extension of temporary appointment

You may extend a temporary limited appointment for a period of up to one additional year (for a total of 24 months) (see 5 CFR Part 316).

When extensions beyond the 24 month limit are needed, you must submit a written request to OPM's Human Capital Leadership and Merit System Accountability (HCLMSA) Division identifying the reasons for the extension and the additional amount of time required to complete the work. OPM will grant such requests only in cases of a major reorganization, base closing, or other unusual circumstances.

Exceptions to the time limits

You may make a temporary limited appointment without regard to the time limits if the position involves intermittent or seasonal work, provided that:

- Appointments and extensions are made in increments of one year or less, and
- Employment in the position is less than six months (1,040 hours), excluding overtime, in a service year.

You must submit a written request to OPM's HCLMSA Division for exceptions due to a major reorganization, base closing, or other unusual circumstances (see 5 CFR Part 316).

How to make temporary appointments

You may use both competitive and non-competitive examining procedures to fill temporary limited positions.

For competitive examining procedures, you may use either:

- 5 CFR Part 332 competitive procedures; or
- 5 CFR Part 337 examining system.

For non-competitive examining procedures, you may use any of the following:

- Reinstatement under 5 CFR Part 315;
- Veterans Recruitment Appointment (VRA) under 5 CFR Part 307;
- Career-conditional appointment under 5 CFR Part 315;
- Appointment of veterans with compensable service-connected disability of 30% or more under 5 U.S.C. § 3112;
- Appointment under 31 U.S.C. § 732(g) for current and former employees of the General Accounting Office;

- Appointment under 28 U.S.C. § 602 for current and former employees of the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts;
- Reappointment on the basis of being a former temporary employee of the agency who was originally appointed either from a certificate of eligibles or under the provisions of 5 CFR Part 337; or
- Reappointment on the basis of being a former temporary employee of the agency who was originally appointed either from a certificate of eligibles or under the provisions of 5 CFR Part 337 and who sustained a compensable injury while serving on a temporary appointment.

How to announce for a temporary job

You must state in the job announcement the time limits for the position, e.g., "not to exceed (NTE) one year." You may wish to include a statement saying that the job may be extended for an additional year if the nature of the duties would warrant such a statement. Jobs lasting a total of 121 days or more must be cleared for Career Transition Assistance Plan (CTAP)/Interagency Career Transition Assistance Plan (ICTAP) (See Chapter 4, Section B).

Where to find information on this topic

For additional information on Temporary Limited Employment, see 5 CFR Part 316.

Term Employment

Definition of term appointment

A term appointment is a no status appointment to a position in the competitive service for a specific period of more than one year but not more than four years.

Initial appointment

You may make a term appointment (5 CFR Part 316):

1. To fill a job that will last for more than one year, but not more than four years, where the need for an employee's services is not permanent; and

2. To meet an employment need that is time limited for reasons, such as:

   - Need to complete a particular project,
   - Extraordinary workload,
   - Scheduled abolishment,
   - Reorganization,
   - Contracting out of the function,
   - Uncertainty of future funding, or
   - Need to maintain the position for future placement of other employees.

Extension of term appointment

You may make an initial term appointment for a period of less than four years. If additional time is necessary, you may extend the appointment up to the four-year limit.

For extensions beyond the four-year time limit, you must submit a written request to OPM's HCLMSA Division identifying the reasons for an additional extension, and the additional time needed (5 CFR Part 316).

Term v. permanent appointment

Term appointments **do not** confer competitive status (5 CFR Part 316). Therefore, you may not select term employees for permanent appointments through merit promotion procedures unless they are eligible for non-competitive appointments using authorities listed in "How to Make Term Appointments." Absent such eligibility for non-competitive appointment, term employees, like any other eligibles, are given permanent appointments only when they are selected from a competitive certificate of eligibles.

How to make term appointments

You may use both competitive and non-competitive examining procedures to fill term positions.

For competitive examining procedures, you may use:

- 5 CFR Part 332 competitive procedures or
- 5 CFR Part 337 examining system.

For non-competitive examining procedures, you may use any of the following:

- Reinstatement under 5 CFR Part 315;
- Veterans Recruitment Appointment under 5 CFR Part 307;
- Career-conditional appointment under 5 CFR Part 315;
- Appointment of veterans with compensable service-connected disability of 30% or more under 5 U.S.C. § 3112;
- Appointment under 31 U.S.C. § 732(g) for current and former employees of the General Accounting Office;
- Appointment under 28 U.S.C. § 602 for current and former employees of the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts;
- Reappointment on the basis of having left a term appointment prior to serving the four year maximum amount of time allowed under the appointment under 5 CFR Part 316; or
- Conversion in the same agency from a current temporary appointment when the employee is or was within reach on a certificate of eligibles for the term appointment at any time during service in the temporary job under 5 CFR Part 316.

How to announce for a term job

The job announcement for a term position of less than four years should clearly state that the agency has the option of extending the appointment up to the four-year limit.

Where to find information on this topic

For additional information on Term Employment, see 5 CFR Part 316.

Administrative Careers With America (ACWA), Alternative Assessments, And Other Hiring Programs

Background

On November 19, 1981, the United States District Court for the District of Columbia resolved a class-action suit that was filed in 1979. The suit alleged that the Professional and Administrative Career Exam (PACE), which the government used to fill approximately 110 occupations at the GS-5 and GS-7 grade levels, had an adverse impact on the selection of African Americans and Hispanics. The resolution of the suit ended the PACE examination and required the use of alternative assessments.

The resolution established two other hiring programs to use as supplements to (not substitutes for) the competitive examining process in situations where adverse impact continues. For information on these other hiring programs go to www.opm/gov/employ/luevano.asp. The merit principle that: "Recruitment should be from qualified individuals from appropriate sources in an endeavor to achieve a work force from all segments of society, and selection and advancement should be determined solely on the basis of relative ability, knowledge, and skills…" still applies (see 5 U.S.C. § 2301(b)(1)). For a prior version of this Handbook, containing a complete discussion concerning these other hiring programs, see links at www.opm/gov/employ/luevano.asp.

Agencies named in the case

Although OPM was the named defendant in the case, approximately 45 other departments and agencies were listed as representatives of the defendant class, which included all agencies that had ever used the PACE. Because most agencies were defendants, whether specifically named or not, you should consult your own legal counsel to determine whether your positions are covered, and, if so, what requirements apply.

Covered Occupations

Only those occupations at the GS-5 and GS-7 grade levels that were once subject to the PACE exam are covered by the resolution of the 1981 suit (see Appendix D).

You may not select an individual for a covered position with the intent of moving him/her later to a non-covered position (see 5 CFR Part 330).

Criteria for covered positions

The covered position must meet **all** of the following criteria:

1. It is being filled at the entry level -- either GS-5 or GS-7;
2. It is classified at a 2-grade interval; and
3. It has a promotion potential to a GS-9, or higher.

Occupations not covered

Occupations in the following Professional and Administrative occupational fields are **not** covered:

- Accounting and Auditing;
- Engineering;
- Physical Sciences;
- Biological Sciences; and
- Mathematical Sciences.

Reporting Requirements

Agencies are required to collect race and national origin (RNO) information from all applicants who apply for a covered position. Your reports must indicate the total number of respondents by series, grade, and geographical area in each RNO category. You must request RNO information from all individuals who apply. Submission of the RNO data by applicants, however, is voluntary.

OPM sends an annual notice to agencies regarding the collection of data for the necessary reports.

Mailing address for reports

Submit reports to:

> Deputy Associate Director
> For Strategic Human Resources Policy Division
> U.S. Office of Personnel Management
> 1900 E Street, NW, Room 6500
> Washington, DC 20415

Note: If you process ACWA applications through OPM's USA Staffing System, the RNO data is automatically captured and will be reported by the Macon Technology Support Center to the Strategic Human Resources Policy Division at the end of each year.

Filling covered positions

If the position you are trying to fill is a covered position, your first step is to fill the job through competitive examining procedures. In addition to competitive examining you may use special hiring authorities in some circumstances. For a prior version of this Handbook, containing a complete discussion concerning these other hiring programs, see links at
www.opm/gov/employ/luevano.asp

Note: To reduce adverse impact, agencies should focus their **recruiting** in a way that increases the pool of African American and Hispanic applicants in these occupations. Alternative authorities are available for that purpose. These procedures, however, must be used as **supplements** to competitive examining process. They should not be used unless your agency has an established pattern of competitive selection into the covered jobs (that is, same series and grade) or is currently making competitive selections into those jobs. You may not use either procedure to hire only persons from the designated minority groups.

ACWA or Alternative Assessments

For filling covered positions (see Appendix D) through the competitive examining process, your examining office must use approved assessment instruments (see Addendum to Interagency Agreement for Delegated Examining Authority). You may either use an OPM-developed assessment instrument or develop your own assessment.   However, if you wish to use an OPM-developed assessment instrument, your agency must sign an addendum to the Interagency Agreement for Delegated Examining Authority, and obtain test security training for test administrators and control officers.

Examining instruments

OPM has developed two types of instruments that you may use for filling positions covered in Appendix D through competitive examining. These are the:

- Administrative Careers with America (ACWA) Written Tests; and
- ACWA Rating Schedules.

Note: If you choose to use one of the ACWA examining instruments, you are responsible for safeguarding and correctly using these materials.

The ACWA Written Test

The ACWA written tests were developed for selection into entry-level GS-5 and GS-7 jobs that were previously covered by the PACE. Based on a job analysis, the occupations were grouped into seven job families of similar occupations. There is no written test for the seventh group. A written test was developed for each of the other six occupational groups.

The written test consists of two parts:

1. A test of job-related abilities, and
2. An Individual Achievement Record (IAR).

The test of job-related abilities consists of two parts: (1) verbal reasoning and (2) quantitative reasoning. A separate test was developed for each of the six occupational groups. Each test measures job-related abilities using subject matter pertinent to the occupation grouping or to general government business that any government professional would be expected to encounter. The competencies measured by the written test are Reading and Mathematical Reasoning.

The IAR is a multiple-choice questionnaire about an applicant's experience, skills, and achievements in school, employment, and other activities. The IAR is based on research on the actual characteristics of successful people in Federal professional and administrative occupations. It is designed to supplement the written test by providing an assessment of additional job-relevant characteristics.

Scores on each part of the examination are combined into a single score that serves as a basis for rating and ranking job applicants.

ACWA rating schedule

The ACWA rating schedules were developed to provide agencies with another option in addition to the written tests for selecting individuals. A separate rating schedule was developed for each of the 111 occupations. The rating schedules assess different competencies from the ACWA written tests and can be used either alone or in combination with the ACWA written tests or a structured interview (see section C).

How to request ACWA examining instruments

To request ACWA assessment instruments, your agency headquarters' Test Security and Control Officer (TSCO) must send the following information to the Strategic Human Resources Policy Division at 1900 E Street, NW, Room 6500, Washington DC 20415:

- Name, address, and telephone number of the agency headquarters' TSCO;
- The names, addresses, and telephone numbers of the TSCOs at all components or field offices where the ACWA assessment instruments will be maintained and administered;
- A list of the occupational series for which you plan to administer ACWA assessment instruments; and
- The type of ACWA assessment you wish to administer, i.e., the written test* or the rating schedule.

*There is a shipping and handling fee for the ACWA Written Test.

Prohibition on modifying ACWA written tests

You may not modify the content of an ACWA Written Test, including the scoring values and final automated ratings. You must use the test intact.

Modifying ACWA rating schedules

When using the ACWA Rating Schedules, you may modify the specialized qualification questions in Questions 1 through 5, but you may not change the rating questions. Since it is a court-approved rating schedule the following restrictions apply:

- You must use the instruments intact.

- You **MAY NOT** modify the contents of the instruments or values used in the scoring process;

- You **MAY NOT** edit, delete, renumber, or change the responses or values of the scoring keys;

- You **MAY NOT** edit, delete, renumber, or otherwise change Questions 6 through 156; and

- You must limit access to computerized examining records through the use of secure passwords by employees of the examining office.

Who can administer ACWA assessment instruments?

Only trained test administrators may administer the ACWA Written Test. Unless test administrators and control officers have been trained in test security procedures, OPM will not release the ACWA Written Test or Rating Schedule (see Appendix E). If an ACWA assessment, i.e., written test or rating schedule, is compromised, you must notify the OPM Chicago Services Branch Director, within 24 hours, at:

> U.S. Office of Personnel Management
> Chicago Services Branch
> 230 South Dearborn Street, DPN 30-3
> Chicago, IL 60604
> Ph: (312) 353-6234
> Fax: (312) 353-6211
> E-mail: Chicago@opm.gov

Distributing ACWA materials

Your agency's TSCO may maintain copies of the rating schedules, scoring keys, and formulas for its delegated examining offices or it may request materials as needed from your local OPM Services Branch.

TSCOs are responsible for distributing and controlling examining materials within their organization.

Terminating the use of the OPM assessments

OPM reserves the right to terminate your use of the ACWA assessment instruments at any time for violating these requirements.

OPM examining services

OPM's Services Branches are available to provide examining or testing services on a reimbursable basis. Contact your local OPM Services Branch directly for more information or visit our web site at www.opm.gov/employ/html/servcntr.asp.

Direct-Hire Authority

Introduction

The Chief Human Capital Officer Act of 2002 (Title XIII of the Homeland Security Act and codified at 5 U.S.C. § 3304) provides you with the authority to appoint candidates directly to jobs for which OPM determines there is:

1. A severe shortage of candidates, or
2. A critical hiring need.

How is direct-hire authority initiated

Direct-hire authority may be initiated by:

- OPM may decide, independently, that a severe shortage of candidates or a critical hiring need exists, either Governmentwide or in specific agencies, for one or more occupational series, grades (or equivalent), or geographic locations; **or**
- A written request submitted by the agency's Chief Human Capital Officer (or equivalent) at the agency headquarters level to OPM identifying the position(s) for which it believes a severe shortage or a critical hiring need exists. The agency must include relevant evidence to support its request.

Direct-hire authority coverage

Direct-hire authority is issued for a permanent or nonpermanent position or group of positions in the competitive service at GS-15 (or equivalent) and below. This authority may be issued for one or more of the following:

- Occupational series;
- Grades (or equivalent); and
- Geographical location.

Impact on competitive requirements

Direct-hire authority permits hiring without regard to sections 3309 through 3318 of title 5, including the following competitive requirements:

- Veterans' preference;
- "Rule of three;" and
- Rating procedures.

Legal compliance

Direct-hire authority must comply with:

- Public notice requirements under 5 U.S.C. §§ 3327 and 3330;
- Career transition requirements (CTAP/ICTAP) under 5 CFR Part 330; and
- Basic qualification requirements for the position (5 CFR Part 338).

Definition of severe shortage of candidates

A severe shortage of candidates for a particular position or group of positions means that an agency having difficulty identifying candidates possessing the competencies or the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to perform the job requirements despite extensive recruitment, extended announcement periods, and the use, as applicable, of hiring flexibilities such as recruitment or relocation incentives or special rates.

Justification for severe shortage of candidates

You must provide justification that demonstrates a severe shortage of candidates for a job or group of jobs exists. The information must show candidates with the required competencies for the job cannot be found despite:

- Extensive recruitment efforts;
- Extended announcement periods; and
- Use of hiring flexibilities (see Chapter 3, Recruitment for more information concerning recruitment tools such as recruitment and retention bonuses, if applicable).

Evidence of a severe shortage

The information you can use to support the justification for severe shortage of candidates can be from sources such as:

- Demonstrated recruitment efforts;
- Strategic human resources management plans that forecast workforce needs;
- Relevant analyses made in connection with workforce planning efforts;
- Labor market data; and
- Employment Trends.

OPM issued direct-hire authority

In an effort to establish that conditions exist for direct-hire authority, OPM will also consider:

- Whether a nationwide or geographical skills shortage exists;
- Extent to which positions are located in an undesirable geographic location;
- Requirement of the incumbent to perform onerous or undesirable duties; and
- Requirement of the incumbent to work under extraordinary or extreme conditions.

Definition of critical hiring need

A critical hiring need for a particular position or group of positions means that an agency has a need to fill the position(s) to meet mission requirements brought about by circumstances such as, but not limited to, a national emergency; threat; potential threat; environmental disaster; or unanticipated or unusual event or mission requirement; or to conform to the requirements of law, a Presidential directive, or Administration initiative.

Critical hiring need

A critical hiring need to fill the job can be brought about by an exigency such as:

- A national emergency;
- Threat or potential threat;
- Environmental disaster; or
- Other unanticipated or unusual events or mission requirements.

Examples of triggers for critical hiring need

Some examples of exigencies that would justify the need for using direct-hire based on critical hiring need are:

- Requirement of law, Presidential directive, or Administration initiatives;
- Congressional or other mandate to meet new or expanded mission requirements by a particular date.

Evidence of a critical hiring need

When requesting approval for direct-hire authority, agencies must:

- Identify the position(s) that must be filled;
- Describe the events or circumstances that have created the need to fill the position;
- Describe how filling the job is critical to the agency's mission;
- Specify the duration for which the critical hiring need is expected to exist; and
- Explain why using other hiring authorities is impracticable or ineffective.

Where to submit a request for Direct-Hire Authority

You must submit your request and supporting documentation to the Associate Director for Strategic Human Resources Policy Division. You should mail or fax your request to:

Associate Director
 For Strategic Human Resources Policy
Office of Personnel Management
1900 E Street, NW, Room 6500
Washington, DC 20415
Fax: 202-606-2329

Documenting personnel actions

When documenting direct-hire authority appointments on the SF-50/52, *Notification of Personnel Action or Request for Personnel Action*, you must use two Nature of Action authority codes:

For agency-specific direct-hire authority use:

- **AYM** as the 1st authority, identifying the appointing under 5 CFR Part 337; and
- **BYO** as the 2nd authority, identifying the agency-specific direct-hire authority.

Note: A list of agency specific direct-hire authorities is located on OPM's web site at http://www.opm.gov/DirectHire/index.asp.

For Governmentwide direct-hire authority use:

- **AYM** as the 1st authority, identifying the appointing under 5 CFR Part 337; and
- A 2nd authority, unique to each new Governmentwide direct-hire authority, which will be issued by OPM. These authority codes are located in the "Guide to Processing Personnel Actions" on OPM's web site at http://www.opm.gov/feddata/gppa/gppa.asp.

Both authority codes must be used when making direct-hire appointments to enable OPM to evaluate the use of this authority without requiring agency reports.

Note: A list of Governmentwide direct-hire authorities is located on OPM's web site at http://www.opm.gov/DirectHire/index.asp. For more information on direct-hire authority visit OPM's web site at http://www.opm.gov/DirectHire/index.asp.

Excepted Service Positions, Senior Executive Positions, and Appointments Authorized by Statute

Introduction

In general, individuals are not eligible for competitive service positions solely on the basis of their past or current employment in the excepted service or Senior Executive Service (SES), or on appointments authorized by statute. In such cases, these candidates must participate in the competitive examining process (5 CFR Part 332).

Categories of service not granted noncompetitive employment conversion

The following categories of service do not grant noncompetitive employment/conversion eligibility:

- Most Schedule A and B appointments *(refer to the specific Schedule A or B authorities to verify if they confer noncompetitive employment/ conversion eligibility)* under 5 CFR Part 213;
- Schedule C appointments (5 CFR Part 213);
- Non-career SES appointments;
- Appointments authorized by public law;
- Appointments of experts and consultants;
- Limited appointments, such as SES limited term appointments, Foreign Service Limited or Reserve appointments, or Intergovernmental Personnel Assignments (IPA); and
- Overseas limited appointments, or un-appropriated or non-appropriated fund appointments.

Candidates with these backgrounds must participate in the competitive process (5 CFR Part 332).

WARNING!

You and your human resources officials should pay particular attention to cases involving consideration of excepted service employees for competitive service vacancies. These employees are often appointed to their excepted service positions without competition. While serving in these positions they gain specialized experience that may give them a definite advantage when competing with other individuals. Although you have flexibilities in filling your vacancies, you should ensure that your hiring decisions are made "solely on the basis of merit and fitness without regard to political or religious affiliations, marital status or race."

Note: The appointment of Schedule C and non-career SES employees to the competitive service warrants special attention to ensure compliance with merit principles. The record in all personnel actions must show clearly that the actions are proper and legitimate. Both OPM and agencies have an obligation to ensure that all personnel actions conform fully to the spirit and letter of Civil Service Rules and to 5 U.S.C. §§ 2301 and 2302, especially the prohibition against political consideration, either favorable or unfavorable.

Interchange agreements

Under Civil Service Rule 6.7, OPM and an agency with an established merit system (in the excepted service) may enter into an agreement prescribing conditions under which employees are eligible to move from the excepted service to the competitive service. A current list of interchange agreements is found on OPM's web site (www.opm.gov, under Appointments).

Section B - Conduct A Job Analysis

Introduction

A job analysis is the foundation of human resources management. A valid job analysis provides data that should be used to develop effective recruitment, selection, performance management, and career development methodologies.

This section provides an understanding of job analysis and its function as an essential part of the selection process.

What is job analysis?

A job analysis identifies the competencies/KSAs directly related to performance on the job. It is a systematic procedure for gathering, documenting, and analyzing information about the content, context, and requirements of the job. It demonstrates that there is a clear relationship between the tasks performed on the job and the competencies/KSAs required to perform the tasks.

A competency is a measurable pattern of knowledge, skills, abilities, behaviors and other characteristics that an individual needs in order to perform work roles or occupational functions successfully (see Multipurpose Occupational Systems Analysis Inventory- Close-Ended (MOSAIC) Competencies, Appendix F). Examples of competencies include:

- Oral communication,
- Flexibility,
- Customer service, and
- Leadership.

Note: To avoid confusion, we refer to both competencies and KSAs as "competencies/KSAs." Although they are not synonymous, they serve the same function in job analysis.

Legal requirements

Federal regulations provide that each employment practice of the Federal Government generally, and of individual agencies, shall be based on a job analysis to identify:

- The basic duties and responsibilities;
- The knowledge, skills, and abilities required to perform the duties and responsibilities; and
- The factors that are important in evaluating candidates (5 CFR Part 300).

In addition, the *Uniform Guidelines on Employment Selection Procedures* (1978), (29 CFR Part 1607) (www.uniformguidelines.com), provide a set of generally accepted principles on employee selection procedures, including when and how to conduct a job analysis that will meet

the standard of the *Guidelines*. The basic principle of the *Uniform Guidelines* is that it is unlawful to use a test or selection procedure that creates adverse impact, unless justified. Consequently, the *Uniform Guidelines* apply only when the selection procedure results in adverse impact. However, the job analysis procedures presented in the *Uniform Guidelines* are good practices to follow in developing selection procedures, even when the selection procedures produce no adverse impact.

Why is job analysis important for selection?

A job analysis is the key to any rational approach to selecting employees. To identify the best person for the job, you should fully understand the nature of the job. Job analysis provides a means of developing such an understanding (see OPM's Job Analysis Methodology, Appendix G).

By systematically examining what the job entails, you can identify the competencies/KSAs that are necessary for success on the job. Once these competencies/KSAs are identified, valid and effective selection tools can be developed.

When to conduct job analysis

You do not need to conduct a new job analysis every time you seek to fill a job. Where job openings in the same occupation recur frequently, you can often rely on selection instruments that were developed from recent job analyses of that occupation. Whether a new job analysis should be conducted for a particular position depends on the novelty of the position and the currency of the most recent job analysis for that occupation.

For example, if the position you seek to fill is unlike any other position in your agency, then you should conduct a job analysis. Similarly, if the nature of the position is such that its requirements are likely to change with relative frequency (e.g., information technology positions), then you should review the position at least annually to ensure that your selection tools are still valid. However, if the requirements of the position are relatively static, then the position may only need to be reviewed as needed.

Results of job analysis

At a minimum, a job analysis should provide a list of tasks and duties associated with that job, as well as information regarding their importance and an indication of the frequency with which these duties are performed.

Document your findings

Document thoroughly any job analysis that you conduct. Date the results and keep them in a file that is maintained exclusively for the position(s) in question. This practice will help you to ensure that your selection methodologies are current and valid.

Section C - Identify Assessment Tools

Introduction

Once you complete your job analysis, the next important step is to determine your assessment strategy. In competitive examining, you may use a broad range of assessment tools or methods. The appropriate assessment strategy depends on a number of factors related to both the positions to be filled and operational issues. These considerations include:

- Competencies/KSAs identified in the job analysis,
- Consequences of making a bad hire,
- Grade level of positions to be filled,
- Validity of assessments,
- Expected number of applicants,
- Resources such as raters and automated systems,
- Time to develop, and
- Costs.

The competencies/KSAs identified in the job analysis are the foundation for your assessment strategy. You should consider those competencies/KSAs that have been identified as critical (i.e., important, required at entry to the position, *and* linked to important job tasks) for your selection process. Choose a manageable set of competencies/KSAs that measure different aspects of job performance. In addition, you should consider the consequences of hiring an applicant who lacks a particular competency/KSA - some competencies can be developed through training. Depending on the level of the position, the consequences of making a bad hire can vary. Making a poor decision when hiring can be very expensive; therefore, you may want to spend more time in the beginning performing a thorough assessment of the needed competencies/KSAs. The key is to use assessments that are valid measures of the competencies/KSAs so that you have useful, appropriate assessments.

Also, consider any operational issues that will impact the implementation of your assessment strategy. Think about the expected number of applicants, based on previous experience and the current labor market. If the number is very high, consider using a hurdle approach in which the first assessment reduces the number of applicants who will continue in the selection process. In addition, think about the resources you will need to administer an assessment to a large number of applicants. For example, structured interviews require several trained experts to serve as interviewers, and therefore are usually used when there are smaller numbers of applicants or towards the end of the selection process. Automated assessments may be a better choice to efficiently handle large numbers of applicants. Of course, time and costs will also affect your choice of an assessment strategy. Be sure to consider the time and costs for both development and implementation of the assessment.

You may choose one or more assessment options to measure a person's competencies/KSAs for a particular job.

Examples of assessment tools are:

- Structured Interview,
- Test,
- Assessment Center,
- Work Sample, and
- Crediting Plan/Rating Schedule.

This section provides information on the advantages and disadvantages of each of several methods to help you determine which method will be most effective in meeting your agency hiring needs.

This section discusses the following topics:

Assessment Tools
Indicators of Proficiency

Assessment Tools

Sources of guidance

The *Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection* provide a set of principles for determining proper test use and selection procedures, covering topics such as test fairness and adverse impact. You can find the *Guidelines* at: www.uniformguidelines.com.

Another source of guidance is the Department of Labor's *Testing and Assessment: An Employer's Guide to Good Practices*. This publication is available at http://www.onetcenter.org/dl_files/empTestAsse.pdf or in hard copy from the Government Printing Office (GPO Order Desk 202/512-1800, Stock Number 029-014-00259-3).

There are several organizations that also publish guidance on the subject of testing standards, including the American Psychological Association (APA), the National Council on Measurement in Education (NCME), and the American Educational Research Association (AERA), which jointly developed *The Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing*. The *Standards* provide information on how to develop, evaluate, and use tests and other assessment procedures in employment settings. Please note that this paragraph is for informational purposes only, and is not an endorsement of that publication.

Understanding reliability and validity

Two important technical characteristics of assessments are *reliability* and *validity*. The quality of an assessment tool can be determined by looking at these two characteristics. The following is a basic explanation of *reliability* and *validity*.

Reliability is the degree of consistency or stability of an assessment tool over time, in different situations, or across applicants, and/or raters. Scores on a reliable assessment tool measure the degree to which a person has the competency and are not affected by factors such as how, where, and when the assessment tool is administered. For example, a test score that remains the same for a person taking the test several times is an indication that the test is reliably measuring a competency.

Validity is the degree to which an assessment tool measures a job-related characteristic *and* how well it is measuring that characteristic. Validity shows the relationship between performance on an assessment tool and performance on the job. For example, an interview that assesses competencies documented as important for job performance is considered valid. Validity is also an indicator of how well the assessment tool is measuring the job-related competencies. For example, two different work sample assessment tools may measure the same job-related competency, but the tool that best measures the competency better is considered more valid.

The role of job analysis in valid assessment

An assessment tool is valid if it measures characteristics or competencies that are important for job performance. Job analysis is a systematic approach to determining which competencies are important for the job. The data (i.e., critical tasks and competencies) from a job analysis are used as the foundation for deciding which assessment tools to use in selection.

For example, assume that a job analysis using subject matter experts shows that "flexibility" is important for successful job performance and also shows that flexibility is needed upon entry into the job. This result would indicate that it is appropriate to assess applicants on "flexibility." The next step is to determine the best assessment tool to use to measure flexibility.

Structured interview

The structured interview is an evaluation of an applicant's job-related competencies/KSAs using standard questions that are scored systematically using predetermined criteria or benchmarks for all interviews for a particular job. The benchmarks typically provide behaviorally specific examples of what constitutes high, medium, and low levels of proficiency. The interview may include questions concerning job knowledge, work sample assessments and work requirements.

Strengths	Considerations	Example of Interview Questions
• High validity and reliability • Low adverse impact • Viewed as fair by the applicant • Comprehensive competency measurement • Short administration time (1 hour) • Difficult for applicants to "fake" responses	A structured interview usually requires involvement of management and subject matter experts for panel participation. Preparing and scheduling participants in advance will significantly reduce the resources required to conduct a structured interview. Reducing the size of the applicant pool through recruitment and/or assessment will help decrease the number of interviews needed.	"Describe a situation in which you identified a problem and evaluated the alternatives to make a recommendation or decision."

Human resource specialists may develop a structured interview. OPM provides training on how to develop and administer a structured interview. For more information, contact your local OPM Services Branch at: http://www.opm.gov/employ/html/servcntr.asp.

Test

A test is an evaluation of an applicant's job-related competencies/KSAs using a series of questions (e.g. true-false, fill-in-the-blank, matching, and multiple choice) or exercises that are administered in a paper-and-pencil or computer format.

Strengths	Considerations	Example
• Has better validity than most other assessment tools • Time and cost effective for multiple administrations • Typically administered in a secure environment • Sets consistent standards for all applicants	• Assessing both cognitive and social/interpersonal competencies will help with potential adverse impact issues. • Initial development costs can be higher than other assessment tools, but low administration costs and re-usability provide long term benefits. • Applicants are increasingly expecting to be assessed through the Internet.	• **Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery** (ASVAB) –The military's aptitude measure enables appropriate placement of soldiers with reference to cognitive, psychomotor, and reasoning skills, as well as career interest paths. • **Scholastic Aptitude Test** (SAT) – An objective test usually given to high school students that is used to make higher education selection decisions.

Using OPM tests

OPM delegated the administration of its written tests to agencies. Agency test administrators must receive training from us before administering these tests. At the request of the examining office, OPM will develop and administer tests on a reimbursable basis. Please see Appendix E, Handbook for Agency Test Administrators and Test Control Officers, for more information.

You must obtain OPM approval to use an OPM-developed written test to determine basic eligibility or as the sole basis for ranking applicants for in-service placement (5 CFR Parts 300 and 338). You must submit a written request to:

> U.S. Office of Personnel Management
> Strategic Human Resources Policy Division
> Center for Talent and Capacity Policy
> 1900 E Street, NW, Room 6500
> Washington,   DC 20415

Specific information about using non-OPM developed assessments

You may develop applicant assessment procedures without assistance from OPM. The development and implementation of the assessments must be consistent with the following:

- The technical standards in the *Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures* (see 29 CFR Part 1607), with respect to the development of any applicant assessment procedure; and

- The *Operating Handbook, Qualifications Standards for General Schedule Positions* (see www.opm.gov). (You may use any written tests that are specifically mentioned in the qualifications standard.) Certain occupations require written tests for in-service placement. If written tests are used, you must follow the guidelines found in the *Operating Handbook, Qualifications Standards for General Schedule Positions*.

Assessment center

An assessment center evaluates an applicant's job-related competencies/KSAs, using multiple raters and exercises to evaluate each competency. The exercises are scored systematically using predetermined criteria or benchmarks. Assessment centers utilize a variety of competency-related assessment simulations including group exercises, in-basket exercises, questionnaires, fact-finding exercises, interviews, and role-playing.

Strengths	Considerations	Example
• Good predictors of job performance, managerial potential, and leadership ability • Participants view assessment centers as a very fair process • Low adverse impact • Provides a comprehensive and in-depth assessment of competencies	• Usually require multiple human raters • While assessment centers can be expensive and while it may be time consuming to develop and administer them, and to train raters, streamlining the process by using technology can reduce the costs significantly • Assessment centers are usually used in helping make management or executive hiring decisions and for selecting eligibles into a management development program.	One role-playing exercise involves the applicant assuming the role of the employee who must deal with another person in a job-related situation. A trained administrator acts as the client and responds "in character" to the actions of the applicant. Raters assess the applicant's performance. If the competency being assessed is "Customer Service," the administrator may act as an angry and upset client and the applicant will be rated on how the applicant deals with the client.

Professional assistance is required when developing assessment centers.

Work sample

A work sample evaluates an applicant's job-related competencies/KSAs based on a work specific activity or simulation of a work activity.

Strengths	Considerations	Example
• High content and face validity • High reliability • Low adverse impact • Viewed as fair by the applicant • Good for tasks that can be completed in a short period of time • Difficult to "fake" a response	• Technology can help reduce the resources needed to develop and administer a work sample. • Work samples vary in complexity and detail. Simple work samples, such as a typing performance test, are low cost and easy to administer. • Work samples are best used when hiring experienced workers and when there are a small number of applicants.	A work sample assessment for a clerical position might require applicants to complete an in-basket exercise during which they are seated at a computer and asked to type a memo, create a spreadsheet, and correspond with a customer using email.

A human resource specialist may develop a work sample assessment. Subject matter experts and measurement specialists should assist in the development.

Crediting plan/ rating schedule

A crediting plan/rating schedule is an evaluation of an applicant's job-related competencies/KSAs performed by a rater, or by an applicant's self-rating. It is accomplished by evaluating the factual background of an applicant (e.g., positions held, levels of responsibility, accomplishments, job-related education) against established job-related criteria.

A crediting plan/rating schedule is best used when the number of applicants is high. Because crediting plans tend to lack the ability to distinguish a top performer from an average performer, and an average performer from a poor performer, we recommend that a crediting plan be combined with another assessment tool such as a test or a structured interview.

Strengths	Considerations	Example
• Inexpensive • Can be developed quickly • Multiple choice crediting plan is easy to score	• Verifying the applicant's responses will help reduce the possibility of "inflated" self-ratings. • Multiple choice rating schedules can be scored quickly, but also limit the opportunity for an applicant to demonstrate his or her competencies. • Crediting plans using a narrative response format can take more time to score than rating schedules. Automating the collection and scoring of a crediting plan will reduce the resources needed.	An assessment where the individuals rate their own experience on job-related competencies, tasks, activities, etc.

Human resource specialists and people familiar with the job being filled may develop a crediting plan. It may be useful to use measurement specialists to provide assistance in developing a high-quality plan.

Example of rating schedule: The Behavioral Consistency Method

Most Federal crediting plans/rating schedules use what is known as the Behavioral Consistency Method. Under the Behavioral Consistency Method of evaluating training and experience, you ask applicants to describe their major achievements in several job-related areas identified for the position, called job dimensions (i.e., competencies/KSAs). The job analysis identifies the competencies/KSAs to be included on the rating schedule. For each competency, benchmarks describe the type and level of achievements that represent each level of competence. Each benchmark has an assigned point value. To determine a rating (score), you compare the information provided by the applicants about their achievements to the benchmarks.

Selection methods that assess training and experience attempt to predict future job performance from past related accomplishments or achievements. You assign a rating (score) through systematic, judgment-based evaluations of information provided by applicants on résumés, applications, or other documents. Examples of accomplishments can be used either to develop rating schedule items (e.g., yes/no or multiple choice formats) or to develop benchmarks to rate applicants' responses (e.g., to open-ended questions). You can gather examples of accomplishments from:

- Job information (e.g., position descriptions),
- Past applications, or
- Subject Matter Experts (SMEs).

You should also use SMEs to assign point values to the items or benchmark examples.

The following steps describe the Behavioral Consistency Method:

Step 1   Identify the competencies to be included on the rating schedule through job analysis.
Step 2   For each competency, develop benchmarks that describe the type and level of accomplishments or achievements that represent each level of proficiency.
Step 3   Assign each benchmark a point value.
Step 4   Compare the information provided by the applicants about their achievements to these benchmarks to determine a rating (score).

The validity of rating schedules

The validity of rating schedules that assess training and experience is usually established using a content validity model. Research has shown that a content validity strategy is applicable to the development and validation of an examination using the Behavioral Consistency Method. The behaviors sampled in the accomplishments are content valid because they sample the kinds of achievements required to perform in the occupation. The purpose of developing competencies/KSAs is to point out the areas in the background of the applicants where the most relevant accomplishments are likely to be found.

The validity of accomplishment records

The Society for Industrial-Organizational Psychology's *Principles for the Validation and Use of Personnel Selection Procedures* (1987) supports the use of content validity for accomplishments. The use of accomplishments can be justified by a similarity between the content of the personal history experience and the content of the occupation. As indicated in the *Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures*, this relationship may be based on the similarity between the competencies or behaviors documented in the accomplishments and those of the occupation, rather than between the exact content of the accomplishments of the job. For instance, a person with program analysis experience need not demonstrate experience writing analytical reports for a specific program or management function. The person provides accomplishments (e.g., analytical reports he/she has written) that demonstrate the competencies required by the job.

Special note

Although the rating schedule is currently the most commonly used assessment tool in the Federal Government, agencies are learning and using new assessment tools. For example, the structured interview has been well received by many agencies and is frequently used. The highest return on investment occurs when you match the most valid assessment strategy to both the recruitment strategy and the competencies needed at entry into the position.

Indicators of Proficiency

A high quality assessment process will provide information about a person's proficiency level on the assessed competencies/KSAs and should predict the person's ability to successfully perform the job. An indicator of proficiency is not an assessment of an applicant; it is a source of evidence that the applicant possesses job-related competencies/KSAs. You should incorporate these indicators into your assessment tool. Examples of indicators of proficiency include:

- Agency certification program;
- Education;
- Experience;
- Professional activity; and
- Professional certification.

The advantages and disadvantages of each are discussed below.

Agency certification program

An agency certification program is developed by an agency, group of agencies, or other group and demonstrates a person's proficiency in job-related competencies/KSAs. An agency certification program does not have to be recognized by a professional community.

Advantages	Disadvantages	Example
- Provides comprehensive competency assessment - Ensures a basic level of proficiency	- Agencies requiring a certificate as a condition of employment must demonstrate that people without the certification cannot perform the job - Only provides information as to whether someone is certified or not certified; does *not* differentiate among those who are certified	An agency's Human Resource Department may develop its own certification program to ensure that the job incumbent/applicant is competent to perform the job.

Education

Education is an indicator of proficiency that relies on course work completed by the applicant that is related to the competencies/KSAs needed to perform in the job. Educational accomplishments are one way to indicate the proficiency of a competency. However, you should include educational accomplishments in an assessment process that assesses other indicators, such as experience.

Advantages	Disadvantages	Example
Beneficial when used along with other assessment methods (e.g. in a structured interview a candidate may speak of educational experiences in answering interview question)	• Low validity when used as the only screening factor (If used alone as an assessment method or requirement, qualified applicants may be eliminated) • In some cases, it is difficult to demonstrate job relatedness and business necessity of education and experience requirements	Applicants are asked to list and describe academic programs or courses they have taken that are related to the competencies being evaluated.

Experience

Experience is an indicator of proficiency relating to the school, home, community, voluntary or work experiences of the applicant that demonstrate the competencies/KSAs needed to perform in the job.

Experience is only one way to indicate the proficiency of a competency. You should include experience in an assessment process that assesses other indicators, such as education, as well. You may use experience to assess both general and technical competencies.

Advantages	Disadvantages	Example
Beneficial when used along with other assessment methods (e.g., in a structured interview an applicant may speak of their experiences in answering interview question)	• Low validity when used as the only screening factor (If used alone as an assessment method or requirement, qualified applicants may be eliminated) • In some cases, it is difficult to demonstrate job relatedness and business necessity of education and experience requirements	Applicants are asked to list and describe experience(s) they have had that are related to the competencies being evaluated.

Professional activity

A professional activity is evidence of substantial contributions to a profession that is related to the competencies/KSAs needed to perform the job.

Advantages	Disadvantages	Example
• If the hiring official is familiar with professional standards, individuals with substantial professional experience will be identifiable • Time effective • Beneficial when used along with other assessment methods (e.g., in a structured interview an applicant may speak of professional experiences in answering interview questions).	• It is sometimes difficult to assign credit to just one person (for example, in the case of joint authorship) • Professional standards vary, but are often perceived to have the same credibility	Publications in professional journals, patents, prizes/awards, etc.

Professional certification

A professional certification is an indicator of proficiency recognized by a specific professional community or industry.

Certification programs are generally required when there is a need to ensure a basic level of a competency. Many jobs involving public safety and public health require certification.

Advantages	Disadvantages	Example
• Provides comprehensive competency assessment • Ensures a basic level of proficiency.	• Agencies requiring certification as a condition of employment must demonstrate that people without the certification cannot perform the job • Only provides information as to whether someone is certified or not certified; does *not* differentiate among those who are certified	Certified Public Accountant (CPA) Certificate – This certificate serves as a permit to practice public accounting. To obtain a CPA Certificate a person must: • Complete a program of study (usually 150 credit hours) in accounting at a college/university; • Pass the Uniform CPA Examination, which is developed and graded by the AICPA; and • Have a certain amount of professional work experience in public accounting

Section D - Submit Request to the Delegated Examining Officer

Introduction

As an HR Specialist you have conducted your job analysis and chosen your assessment tool(s), and are now ready to submit your request to your delegated examining officer (DEO).

Recommended form

When using the delegated examining process, you should provide information documenting the significant facts about the job that you want filled. For this purpose, we recommend using the Standard Form (SF) 39, *Request for Referral of Eligibles*, because it is a comprehensive document that identifies all required information. You may download a copy of the SF 39 from OPM's web site, www.opm.gov/forms. However, its use is not mandatory.

Submitting your request

If you choose to use an SF 39, you may use one SF 39 for multiple vacancies for the same position (e.g., GS-05/07/09), type of appointment, and work schedule.

We recommend that you annotate the request for certification of eligibles (or SF 39 if it is used) with the receipt date to help you track the timeliness of the certification process. You should then review the request document or the SF 39, to ensure that it contains all the information necessary to issue a certificate. The SF 39 or request document should be accompanied by the appropriate position description(s). For any request, you must attach a job analysis (please see Section B), justification for using selective placement factors (see Chapter 5, Section B), proposed competencies/KSAs, crediting plan/rating schedule or other assessment tool, and completed application forms.

Section E - References

The following table provides a list of sources pertaining to the topics covered by this section:

Topic	Reference
Personnel actions to conform with civil service rules	5 U.S.C. 2301 and 2302 5 CFR Part 302 38 U.S.C. 4214
Experts and consultants	5 U.S.C. 3109
Appointment of veterans with compensable service-connected disability of 30% or more	5 U.S.C. 3112 5 CFR Part 316
Laws requiring agencies to report to OPM and DOL vacancies in the competitive service and Senior Executive Service	5 U.S.C. 3327 5 CFR Part 330
Appointment for current and former employees of the Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts	28 U.S.C. 602
Appointments for current and former employees of the General Accounting Office	31 U.S.C. 732(g)
Interchange agreements	Civil Service Rule 6.7
Schedule A and B appointments	5 CFR Part 213
Job analysis regulations	5 CFR Part 300
Veterans recruitment appointment	5 CFR Part 307
Career-conditional appointment	5 CFR Part 315
Reinstatement	5 CFR Part 315
Term employment	5 CFR Part 316
Temporary limited appointment	5 CFR Part 316
Reappointment on the basis of being a former temporary employee of the agency who was originally appointed from a certificate of eligibles; Reappointment on the basis of being a former temporary employee of the agency who was originally appointed from a certificate of eligibles and who sustained a compensable injury while serving on a temporary appointment	5 CFR Parts 316 and 333
Recruitment, selection, placement (General)	5 CFR Part 330
Competitive examining procedures	5 CFR Part 332
Promotion and internal placement	5 CFR Part 335
Direct-Hire Authority	5 CFR Part 337
Qualification requirements (General)	5 CFR Part 338
Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures	29 CFR Part 1607 **www.uniformguidelines.com**
Operating Handbook, Qualifications Standards for General Schedule Positions	**www.opm.gov**
The Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing	**www.apa.org/books/standard.html**
OPM web page for forms	**www.opm.gov**

Topic	Reference
OPM contact for providing training on how to develop and administer the structured interview	http://www.opm.gov/employ/html/servcntr.asp
Contact for structured interview questions	http://www.opm.gov/employ/html/servcntr.asp
Adarand v. Peña	93-1841, 515 US 200 (1995)
Administrative Careers With America, Alternative Assessments and Other Hiring Programs Positions	Appendix D
Handbook for Test Administrators and Test Control Officers	Appendix E
MOSAIC competencies	Appendix F
OPM's job analysis methodology	Appendix G

Chapter 3 - Recruit and Announce the Job

A request to fill a job comes into the delegated examining office. You have a general idea of what types of appointments you may use to bring someone into your agency. You have conducted the job analysis, and you know what criteria will make someone successful on the job. You also know how you will assess the applicants. You are now ready to recruit the right people to apply for the job. This chapter contains the following section:

Section A   Recruitment
Section B   What is Public Notice?
Section C   Create a Job Announcement
Section D   References

Section A – Recruitment

Introduction

The purpose of effective recruiting is to attract strong applicants prepared to perform successfully on the job. Recruiting is an on-going process. It is not a phase, nor is it something you do only when you need applicants.

As career opportunities and interests throughout the job market in America and abroad have continued to evolve, approaches to recruitment also have to change and adapt. Before developing any recruitment strategy, we recommend you review the following:

- OPM's *A Guide for Agencies*; *Career Patterns – A 21st Century Approach to Attracting Talent* dated June 2006 located on OPM's web site at http://www.opm.gov/CareerPatterns/.
- OPM's *Hiring Toolkit* located on OPM's web site at http://www.opm.gov/hiringtoolkit/

Developing a recruitment strategy

Efficient recruitment requires development and delivery of customized messages. It also requires a good understanding of how effective different recruitment strategies are in terms of producing a high quality, diverse applicant pool. Choosing the wrong strategy may produce too many or too few applications. Efficient recruitment strategies produce the required results in the shortest time.

The five (5) steps in developing a recruitment strategy are:

1.   Become a strategic partner with our agency's managers to identify recruitment needs.
2.   Analyze the future demands of your agency's workforce and identify appropriate occupations, competency requirements, and hiring strategies.
3.   Research the labor market and design your message and corporate image.
4.   Identify and train recruiters.
5.   Establish and maintain relationships with the best sources of applicants for your workforce (e.g., colleges/universities, technical and trade schools, professional associations).

Recruitment tools

There are a variety of recruiting tools available. They include:

Outreach
- Paid advertising
- Job fairs at schools and community events
- Special internet-based recruiting web sites
- Contracted recruiting support from other Federal agencies or commercial firms (5 CFR Part 300)

Special software applications that screen applicants

Monetary incentives
- Recruitment bonuses (5 CFR Part 575)
- Referral bonuses (5 CFR Part 451)
- Relocation bonuses (5 CFR Part 575)
- Retention allowances (5 CFR 575)
- Advance payment for new hires (5 CFR Part 550)
- Pay-setting for current or former Federal employees (5 CFR Part 531)
- Special salary rates (5 CFR Part 530)
- Student loan repayment (5 CFR Part 537)

Superior qualifications appointments (5 CFR Part 531)

Performance incentives
- Quality Step Increases (5 CFR Part 531)
- Agency awards (5 CFR Part 451)

Student Programs
- Career Intern (5 CFR Part 213)
- Student Career Experience (5 CFR Part 213)
- Student Loan Repayment (5 CFR Part 537)

Recruitment v. public notice

Recruitment is often confused with public notice. Public notice is one part of the overall recruitment process (see Section B). Public notice, or simply posting a job announcement, is not a substitute for the more focused recruiting you may need to undertake to fill positions with highly qualified applicants. Remember, recruitment is an on-going process, which requires attention even during the times when you are not "actively" seeking to fill a job.

As a result, we do not recommend that you rely solely on the job announcement as the cornerstone of your recruitment strategy. Rather, we recommend that you use all of the tools at your disposal to produce a high quality, diverse applicant pool.

For more information on public notice see Section B of this chapter.

Section B - What is Public Notice?

Introduction

Public notice explains to job seekers when, where, and how to apply for a Federal job. Public notice is required whenever you are considering hiring applicants from outside the Federal workforce for competitive service positions.

Basic requirement for public notice

Under 5 U.S.C. §§ 3327 and 3330, you must notify OPM of job opportunities in the competitive service. This legal requirement supports the merit system principles (5 U.S.C. § 2301), the first of which reads:

> "Recruitment should be from qualified individuals from appropriate sources in an endeavor to achieve a work force from all segments of society, and selection and advancement should be determined solely on the basis of relative ability, knowledge, and skills, after fair and open competition which assures that all receive equal opportunity."

Although the public notice requirement is an essential component of a merit-based recruiting and examining program, meeting this requirement is not itself sufficient to satisfy the merit system principles. There are nine merit principles, each of which is equally important, and several of which are relevant to the delegated examining process. For a complete summary of the merit system principles, and how they relate to various aspects of delegated examining, see Appendix H, Model Agency-Based Accountability Agenda.

Required notice via USAJOBS

You must list your jobs on the USAJOBS database (see 5 U.S.C. §§ 3327 and 3330). Once this information is on the USAJOBS database, OPM transmits this information electronically to State employment service offices nationwide.

There are two ways to enter job announcements into USAJOBS:

1. **OPM Web site**: Go to http://www.usajobs.opm.gov and follow the "Employer Services" link, and

2. **By email**: Send OPM an email at usajobshelp@opm.gov, and OPM will provide you with a template that you can use to submit job announcements by email. You can find information about the email template by logging on to www.usajobs.opm.gov. On the main page, click on the title "Employer Services." Type the word "demo" in each blank field: first name, last name, and password. Press the submit button. Next, click on the title, "Users Guide and Data Tables," to obtain a copy of the guide and the job entry template.

Note: Please note that we will not accept job announcements by email unless the template is used.

Adequate public notice

The merit principles require that agencies provide adequate public notice of every competitive service vacancy that they are filling. Adequate public notice means that any person who wants to apply for a position will have access to all of the information necessary to apply, and will be given an open and fair opportunity to be hired. Depending on your need for applicants, additional recruitment activities may or may not be necessary.

Determining an open period for receiving applications

You are responsible for determining an open period for receiving applications that is of sufficient duration to provide the public with adequate notice of the job announcement. What constitutes an adequate open period may vary depending on your recruitment plan, the nature of the position(s), promotion potential, available labor market, and other considerations. Once you have determined the open period, you should clearly state it in the job announcement.

Factors in determining length of open period

You could establish a short notice period when you have only a few jobs to fill and expect a large number of well-qualified applicants. Conversely, you could establish an open continuous notice period when it is difficult to find qualified individuals or when you have many vacancies to fill.

Defining the open period

You may define an open period that is based on either a specific date or a specific number of applications to be received.

IF…	THEN…
A closing date is used to define the open period	The job announcement should clearly state whether the timeliness of submissions will be determined by the postmark, or by the date the application is received in the examining office.
The open period is defined in terms of a specific number of applications received	- you should accept and process all of the applications received by close of business on the day that the specified number is reached; and the job announcement should clearly state - the number of applications that will be accepted for consideration.

Recommended open period

OPM suggests that you prescribe an open period of at least five business days to ensure that people who want to apply for the position have an adequate opportunity to do so.

If you prescribe an open period of fewer than five business days, you should clearly document your reasons for doing so in the examination case file (for reconstruction purposes). Your reasons should be based on objective factors, such as the number and type(s) of jobs you plan to fill, labor market conditions, and recent experience filling similar positions.

Closing dates and cut-off dates

A *closing date* is the date beyond which you will no longer accept applications for the advertised position(s). When applicable, you should ensure that the job announcement clearly informs the applicants of the closing date. (For conditions in which a closing date is used, see *Defining the open period*.)

In addition to the closing date, you may also establish a *cut-off date*. A cut-off date establishes an early consideration period. If a cut-off date is established, you must rate, rank, and refer to the selecting official all applications received by the cut-off date. In addition, you must consider any application received from a 10-point preference eligible who applies after the cut-off date **but** before the date that the certificate is issued (See 5 CFR Part 332). You may consider applications received after the cut-off date only when the initial group is exhausted and/or there are additional vacancies to fill. If a cut-off date is not identified, you should consider all the applications received by the closing date.

When to use a cut-off date

You can use cut-off dates to manage the receipt of large numbers of applications over an extended period of time, or if you have an open-continuous job announcement for hard-to-fill positions and an urgent need to fill a position immediately. Cut-off dates may be used in both case examining and competitor inventories (see Chapter 5, Section C). However, you should generally not use them in case examining, except where the job announcement is intended to remain open for an extended period of time and multiple jobs are to be filled.

If you use a cut-off date, you should clearly identify the date in the job announcement. The job announcement should also explain the process that will take place as a result of the cut-off date. For example, you may want to indicate in the job announcement that an initial cut-off date will be used to begin applicant consideration and that applications received after the cut-off date will be considered if needed. Under these circumstances, you can identify daily cut-offs so your agency can issue a certificate as vacancies arise or as qualified applicants are identified without having to wait for the next cut-off date.

Application receipt procedures

Your agency headquarters is responsible for establishing policy and procedures for accepting and processing applications from all applicants, including status applicants.

In developing these policies and procedures, your headquarters must comply with all applicable laws and regulations including the following:

- Merit system principles of public notice and open competition (5 U.S.C. § 2301 or Appendix H);
- Merit system principles of efficiency and effectiveness (5 U.S.C. § 2301 or Appendix H);
- Rights of preference eligibles (5 U.S.C. § 2108);
- Rights of surplus or displaced employees (5 CFR Part 330), and
- Eligibility for non-competitive appointments (5 CFR Part 315).

Frequently, agencies solicit applications from both the public and merit promotion applicants simultaneously. Sometimes one job announcement is used to solicit applications for both external and internal competitions. In such a case, the job announcement must clearly specify the filing instructions and conditions for each type of applicant.

Section C - Create a Job Announcement

The job announcement is one of the most powerful tools in the recruitment process. It provides an important opportunity to make a first impression on potential applicants, and may strongly influence their decision to apply for your position. Therefore, it is important to create an announcement that is clear, concise, and attractive. It should capture interest and make applicants want to apply. You should broadcast a realistic preview of the position and provide a glimpse of the organization and its culture, if possible.

What to include in a job announcement

You must include the following required items in your job announcement (see 5 U.S.C. 3327 and 3330, 5 CFR Part 330 and Executive Order 13078):

Required Items for a Job Announcement

- Agency Name
- Announcement Number
- Title of the Position
- Series
- Grade(s) (or equivalent) and Entrance Pay
- Open and Closing Dates (including cut-off dates, if any)
- Duty Location
- Number of Vacancies
- Description of Duties
- Qualification Requirements (Competencies/KSAs required)
  Reminder: For positions with minimum education requirements, with limited exceptions, only education from institutions which are accredited or preaccredited/candidate for accreditation may be used to meet those requirements. For further information on the acceptability of higher education for meeting minimum qualification requirements, please refer to www.opm.gov/qualifications. For a list of schools which meet these criteria, please refer to http://www.ed.gov.
- Basis for Rating:
  o Type of rating procedure either numeric rating or category rating;
  o Type of assessment(s) to be used,
  o If using an interview, whether the interview is pass/fail or scored,
  o If using category rating, description of each quality category,
  o Whether a drug test is required.
- How to Apply (including point of contact, telephone number and email address, if appropriate
- What to File
- Agency's Definition of "Well-Qualified" (CTAP/ICTAP)
- Information on How to Claim Veterans' Preference
- Equal Employment Opportunity Statement
- Reasonable Accommodation Statement

Additional items for a job announcement

In addition to the required public notice items, you may include additional items designed to attract job-seekers, such as information covering the following:

- Recruitment/Relocation Incentive Opportunities
- Alternative Work Schedules
- Part-time Employment and Job Sharing Opportunities
- Telework Options
- Employee Benefits:
    - Insurance (Life, Health, Dental, Vision, Long Term Care)
    - Flexible Spending Accounts for Health Care and for Dependent Care
    - Leave (Vacation, Medical, Family, and Leave Sharing)
- Work/Like Programs (e.g., On-site Day Care, Nursing Mothers Program, Child Care Subsidy, Employee Health Programs)
- Transit Subsidy
- Employee Assistance Programs
- Incentive Award Opportunities
- Development and Training Opportunities

Reasonable accommodation statement

You must include language in the job announcement stating that reasonable accommodations are made for qualified applicants or employees with disabilities. The statement below complies with Executive Order 13078 and OPM's goal to increase the representation of adults with disabilities in the Federal workforce. You can use this statement or the wording of your choice, so long as you convey the message that your agency provides reasonable accommodation for applicants with disabilities:

> ***This agency provides reasonable accommodation to applicants with disabilities. If you need a reasonable accommodation for any part of the application and hiring process, please notify the agency. The decision on granting reasonable accommodation will be made on a case-by-case basis.***

For more information on OPM's Plan for Employment of People with Disabilities, you can visit our website, www.opm.gov/disability.

How to prepare a Veterans Employment Opportunity Act (VEOA) job announcement

The Veterans Employment Opportunities Act (VEOA) of 1998, as amended, allows preference eligibles or veterans to compete for vacancies under merit promotion procedures when the agency is accepting applications from individuals outside its own workforce. Veterans who are selected are given career or career-conditional appointments. Veterans, for the purpose of this statute, are preference eligibles and those who have been separated under honorable conditions with 3 or more years of continuous active service. The VEOA gives preference eligibles and other eligible veterans access and opportunity to apply for positions that would otherwise be closed to them, if an agency limits consideration to "status" applicants by using only merit promotion procedures to announce and fill a position. Access and opportunity are not an entitlement to the position and are not a guarantee for selection. For more information about VEOA, you can visit our web site at www.opm.gov/veterans.

Agencies announcing a position to applicants outside their workforce have the following options for posting their job announcement:

1. **Post an "internal" merit promotion job announcement**. When posting a merit promotion announcement for eligible candidates outside its own workforce, the agency is required to include information concerning consideration under the VEOA. This option meets the intent of the law which allows the VEOA eligible the access and opportunity to compete with current and former Federal employees (i.e., those with competitive status).

2. **Post an "external" job announcement for "all sources"**. Posting the announcement as "all sources" gives the VEOA eligible the same access and opportunity to compete for the position as everyone else. If the VEOA eligible is qualified and within reach for referral, the veteran must be referred on a competitive certificate of eligibles, with preference eligibility applied.

With an "all sources" announcement, most agencies consider applicants under a variety of other appointing authorities such as, merit promotion, Veterans' Recruitment Appointment (VRA), or Schedule A of the excepted service. In such a case, the job announcement must clearly specify the filing instructions and conditions for each type of applicant consistent with the agency's policies and procedures for accepting and processing applications.

3. **Post two separate job announcements – "external" "all sources" and "internal" merit promotion.** The VEOA eligible may apply for both announcements since the agency posted the job announcements separately. The VEOA eligible is given two opportunities to be considered for one position and must be referred and considered on both lists, if eligible under the applicable procedures. The agency cannot remove the VEOA eligible from either list to make a selection. This means the agency may not deny consideration under one referral such as an external certificate because the VEOA eligible is being considered under a different referral such as an internal merit promotion list.

Section D - References

The following table provides a list of sources pertaining to the topics covered by this section:

Topic	Section
Rights of preference eligibles	5 U.S.C. § 2108
Merit System Principles	5 U.S.C. § 2301
Civil service employment information	5 U.S.C. § 3327
Governmentwide list of vacant positions	5 U.S.C. § 3330
Career Intern	5 CFR Part 213
Student Career Experience	5 CFR Part 213
Contracted recruiting support from other Federal agencies or commercial firms	5 CFR Part 300
Rights of surplus or displaced employees	5 CFR Part 330
Legal and regulatory requirements, such as those concerning noncompetitive appointing authorities	5 CFR Part 315
Performance awards	5 CFR Part 451
Special salary rates	5 CFR Part 530
Quality step increases	5 CFR Part 531
Superior qualifications appointments	5 CFR Part 531
Student load repayment	5 CFR Part 537
Advance payment for new hires	5 CFR Part 550
Recruitment bonuses	5 CFR Part 575
Relocation bonuses	5 CFR Part 575
Retention allowances	5 CFR Part 575
Reasonable accommodation	Executive Order 13078
OPM USAJOBS web site	www.usajobs.opm.gov
Plan for employment of people with disabilities	www.opm.gov/disability
Veterans Employment Opportunities Act of 1998	www.opm.gov/veterans
List of accredited schools	http://www.ed.gov
Model agency-based accountability coverage agenda	Appendix H

Chapter 4 - Accept and Review Applications

Once you have announced the job, you are ready to accept applications. This chapter offers some guidance regarding how to review and process applications for Federal employment. It contains the following sections:

Section A   Accepting Applications
Section B   Reviewing Applications
Section C   References

Section A - Accepting Applications

This section provides guidance regarding the receipt of job applications

- Application Forms
- Receiving Applications

Application Forms

Introduction

There are a variety of applications forms. These include:

- Résumé;
- OF 612, *Optional Application for Federal Employment*;
- Any other form chosen by the hiring agency (see "Designing your own application forms," below); or
- Any other form of the applicant's choosing, unless the job announcement indicates that specific forms are required.

Electronic applications

While OPM encourages agencies to take full advantage of technology by accepting on-line applications, you may not restrict individuals who do not have Internet access from being able to apply. You may require submission of applications in a particular format or form, but you may not require only electronic submission. Job announcements may encourage and should encourage electronic filing, but you must provide information about alternative methods or a contact for those who do not have Internet access.

Filing forms electronically

You may use OPM-developed procedures exclusively for applicants to file applications or you may also direct applicants to your own agency-specific procedures. One method is to allow applicants to file their applications electronically, provided:

- the procedures for doing so are consistent with applicable law and regulations, and
- you give applicants who cannot apply online a point of contact for assistance.

Examples of commonly used electronic forms:

On-line Occupational Questionnaire: The on-line occupational questionnaire is an electronic version of OPM 1203 FX Qualifications and Availability, Form C, which collects an applicant's biographic data, employment information, and responses to job-related questions. Examining offices may allow applicants to file their job-related questionnaire through a link on the USAJOBS web site. To do so, applicants must first retrieve the appropriate job announcement and follow the instructions for completing the questionnaire either on-line or by hard copy. Applicants who file an occupational questionnaire electronically must do so by midnight, Eastern Standard Time, of the closing date of the announcement. You may make arrangements with your local OPM Services Branch to take advantage of this feature of USAJOBS; or

On-line Résumés: When you post a job announcement into USAJOBS, you should indicate whether you will accept electronic résumés. Job-seekers can then use USAJOBS' on-line résumé feature to create, save and edit résumés and transmit them to you electronically. On-line résumés must be submitted during the announcement open period to receive consideration. You may either process the résumés manually, or integrate them into your automated application receipt and/or processing systems.

Designing your own application forms

You must obtain approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) before you may use your own application form to collect information from members of the public. Generally, OMB will approve such forms only if you have unique, specialized requirements or use an automated rating system (see 5 CFR Part 1320).

Supplemental documents

You may also require necessary supplemental documents from applicants, such as college transcripts, answers to competency/KSA statements, and copies of licenses where appropriate.

NOTE: A selecting official may accept and consider an employment recommendation from a Member of Congress only if it pertains to the "character and residence of the applicant" (see 5 U.S.C. § 3303).

Restricting applications to résumés only

You may restrict applications to résumés. However, you may not restrict the types of sources that applicants may use to create their résumés. In other words, you must accept résumés created from *any* source; e.g., online résumé builder, résumé preparation software, word processing software or typewriter, as long as the résumé meets your requirements for format, content and length (you must clearly specify any such requirements in the job announcement).

Receiving Applications

Applications received after the closing date

As a general rule, you may not consider applications received after the closing date. However, you may grant an extension in some circumstances, and certain applicants are entitled to file after the closing date (see "When to Provide an Extension" and "Accepting Late Applications," below).

How to handle postmarked materials

When a postmark is used as the basis for determining if an application was submitted on time, you should not issue a certificate until at least five business days after the closing date. This will allow for a reasonable period in which to receive applications postmarked by the closing date.

Any application that bears a timely postmark should be properly annotated with the postmark date to allow for case file reconstruction.

When to provide an extension

You may give automatic extensions to persons who request application materials on or before the closing date. When you grant such an extension, you should specify a response due date and annotate the application packet so that you can identify the forms upon their return.

Please note that if you do grant extensions, you should delay the issuance of the certificate of eligibles (see Chapter 6) until either:

1. Applications are received from all of the applicants to whom extensions were granted, or
2. The extended due date has passed.

Accepting late applications

Applications from persons who are entitled to file late should be accepted and processed up until the time that a certificate is issued. Once a certificate is issued, however, you should not amend it to include late applications unless you are requested to do so by the selecting official. If you amend the certificate based on the selecting official's request, then you should refer all applications received on the same date and earlier.

Please see chart below for how to handle preference eligible applicants.

IF the applicant…	THEN the applicant…
is a 10–point preference eligible	may file an application at any time for any position for which a: • Register is about to be established (5 CFR Part 332); • non-temporary appointment has been made in the preceding three years (5 CFR Part 332); or • list of eligibles currently exists but is closed to new applicants (5 CFR Part 332).
is a preference eligible	• is entitled to be entered on an existing competitor inventory if he or she applies within 90 days after furlough or separation without delinquency or misconduct from a career or career-conditional appointment, provided that he or she is otherwise qualified for the position (5 CFR Parts 5.1 and 332); • may enter an existing inventory if he or she *has successfully appealed a furlough or discharge* from a career or career-conditional appointment, and is otherwise qualified for the position (5 CFR Parts 5.1 and 332); and • is entitled to be re-entered on each existing inventory (or its successor) on which he or she was previously listed, provided that he or she applies within 90 days after *resignation* without delinquency or misconduct from a career or career-conditional appointment (5 CFR Parts 5.1 and 332).

IF the applicant…	THEN the applicant…
was unable to file for an open competitive examination or to appear for a test due to *service in the armed forces or hospitalization* continuing for up to one year following discharge from the armed services	may file an application after the closing date if the inventory of eligibles still exists or if an inventory is about to be established (5 CFR Part 332).
was unable to file an application or to appear for a written test due to *overseas service with a Federal agency or international organization* in which the U.S. Government participates (e.g., Peace Corps)	may file an application after the closing date if the inventory of eligibles still exists, or if one is about to be established (5 CFR Part 332).
was on an inventory of eligibles but *lost eligibility* for appointment *due to active duty in the Armed Forces*	is entitled to be restored to that inventory (or its successor) and to have his/her name entered at the top of the appropriate group on the register if another eligible standing lower on the register on which his/her name formerly appeared was given a career or career-conditional appointment from that register (5 CFR Part 332).
is a *Federal employee* who was unable to file for an open competitive examination or to appear for a test due to *active Reserve duty* continuing beyond 15 days	may file an application after the closing date if the inventory of eligibles still exists, or if one is about to be established (5 CFR Part 332)

Incomplete Applications

General Rule

An application is incomplete if an applicant:

- Does not submit a required form or other material, as specified in the job announcement;
- Fails to respond to questions that he or she must answer before any action can be taken; or
- Submits insufficient information concerning education or experience.

You may rate incomplete applications based on the information provided, or you may ask the applicant to furnish the missing information. Whichever option you choose, however, *you should apply it consistently for all applicants* for any specific position or competitor inventory.

Applicants who fail to provide a college transcript

For entry-level jobs with positive education requirements, a transcript may be critical for examining purposes. A list of courses, grades earned, completion dates, and quarter and semester hours earned can be a substitute for a transcript at the time of application. If applicable, applicants should also be asked to provide information about their grade point average (GPA) to verify eligibility for higher grade levels.

For other categories of positions, such as those at the higher grade levels, a college transcript is normally not a significant examining factor. As a rule, you should not consider a transcript an absolute requirement unless it is necessary to determine basic qualifications.

By the time of appointment, however, an appointee should provide an official college transcript, so that you may verify the degree and/or grade-point average that he or she reported on his or her application.

Applicants who are on active military duty

Applicants who are on active military duty will not have a DD Form 214, *Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty*, at the time of application. Prior to appointment, you should verify:

- The eligible's entitlement to veterans' preference, and
- That the eligible's military service was honorable.

You can find eligibility information, including a list of campaigns and expeditions qualifying for veterans' preference, in the *Federal Employment Policy Handbook*: *Veterans and the Civil Service (VetGuide)* on OPM's web site at www.opm.gov/veterans.

How to handle applications from applicants who are on active military duty

The following chart will help you in adjudicating veterans' preference for applicants who are on active military duty.

IF an applicant is on active duty and claims…	AND IF the veteran submitted proof of …	THEN…
5-point preference	Service in a war, campaign, or expedition	• Grant tentative 5-point preference, if proof of military service is received; • Do not grant 5-point preference, if proof of military service is not received or lacks sufficient documentation to support 5-point preference
10-point preference	a completed form SF 15, *Application for 10-point Veterans' Preference*; and • a letter from the military branch of service; or from the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) issued in 1991 or later, certifying that the veteran has a permanent service-connected disability; or • a letter from the military branch of service or from the DVA certifying temporary disability dated within 12 months from the date of application.	• Grant 10-point veterans' preference, if proof of claim is received; • Grant tentative 5-point preference if the applicant meets the veterans' preference requirements, if proof is insufficient to support 10-point preference; • Do not grant preference, if proof of claim is not received.
10-point preference on the basis of receiving a Purple Heart	• a copy of the orders awarding the Purple Heart; • award citation, or • some reasonable or tangible proof that the applicant has the fact received this award	• Grant 10-point tentative preference

Applicants who fail to sign their application

A signature is no longer required on an employment application. The OF 306, *Declaration for Federal Employment* contains a signature block with all of the necessary certifications. The signature on the OF 306 is required at the time of appointment.

Section B - Reviewing Applications

This section provides guidance on how to review applications based on career transition programs, veterans' preference, and other requirements. This section contains the following topics Career Transition Assistance Program Requirements, Citizenship, Veterans' Preference, Age, and Other Requirements, Qualification Requirements, and Suitability.

Career Transition Assistance Program Requirements

Introduction

Applications must be reviewed to determine which applicants, if any, are entitled to selection priority based on the requirements of an agency career transition assistance plan (CTAP), an interagency career transition assistance plan (ICTAP), or Reemployment Priority List (RPL) (see 5 CFR Part 330). You should not put these employees on a competitive selection certificate, but should instead refer them separately.

Career Transition Assistance Plan (CTAP)

Under CTAP, you must notify employees who are surplus or have been displaced from your agency of vacancies that your agency plans to fill in their local commuting area. With few exceptions, you must select a "CTAP eligible" candidate who applies and is well-qualified before you can appoint any other eligible from within or outside your agency (see 5 CFR Part 330 and Appendix I). Although CTAP only applies while the surplus/displaced employee is still on your agency's rolls, an individual who has been separated may still be eligible for selection priority under other programs, such as RPL and ICTAP.

Where to find records of all potential CTAP eligibles

Because CTAP eligibility results from an agency-issued notice, your agency should have records of all potential CTAP eligibles at any given time and locale. If your agency has no CTAP eligibles in the commuting area in which the job is located, CTAP posting is not required. However, regular merit promotion procedures and other priority programs, such as the Reemployment Priority List (RPL) and the Interagency Career Transition Assistance Plan (ICTAP), may still affect how you fill the position (see below).

For more information on CTAP for Local Surplus and Displaced Employees, including eligibility requirements, order of selection, and exceptions, see 5 CFR Part 330.

Special note

Department of Defense (DOD): DOD agencies do not provide agency selection priority through CTAP. Instead, DOD uses the Priority Placement Program (PPP) to place its surplus employees. DOD also provides career transition services to its employees to the extent possible. Displaced DOD employees may also register for their local RPL, and request selection priority for jobs in non-DOD agencies using the ICTAP.

Agency Reemployment Priority List (RPL)

You are required to maintain a Reemployment Priority List (RPL) for each commuting area in which your agency has separated employees by reduction in force (RIF). Former employees who separated because of work-related injuries but have since recovered may also be eligible for your agency RPL.

By registering for the RPL, these former employees are informing their former agency that they want to return if vacancies exist for which they are qualified. Before you may select an eligible from outside your agency, you must first check the RPL for the commuting area in which the job is located.

For information on the RPL, including eligibility requirements, required selection order and exceptions, see 5 CFR Part 330.

Interagency Career Transition Assistance Plan (ICTAP)

The Interagency Career Transition Assistance Plan (ICTAP) is a process by which employees who have been involuntarily separated may receive selection priority for jobs in agencies other than the one in which they were previously employed (see Appendix I).

Under ICTAP, an agency must publicize its job vacancies for which it is recruiting from outside its own workforce in the local commuting area. Displaced Federal employees who worked in the local commuting area and who apply for a local job are entitled to selection priority if they are well-qualified and can provide proof that they were displaced by their former agency.

ICTAP gives a well-qualified eligible selection priority over almost any other applicant from outside the agency. Under ICTAP, for example, a Department of Defense employee with a reduction-in-force (RIF) notice could apply for a Department of Education competitive service job in the local commuting area. In most cases, Education must select this well-qualified priority eligible before choosing another applicant from outside the agency.

For more information on ICTAP for displaced employees, including eligibility requirements, order of selection, and exceptions see 5 CFR Part 330.

Special note

Department of Defense (DOD): DOD agencies must apply ICTAP procedures when filling vacancies.

Other priority placement programs

There is another category of eligibles who may have selection priority for jobs equal to the priority of well-qualified ICTAP eligibles: Preference eligibles in restricted positions displaced by A-76 procedures.

Preference eligibles who were displaced from restricted positions (i.e., custodian, elevator operator, guard, and messenger positions) as a result of the "contracting out" of functions pursuant to A-76 procedures are eligible for ICTAP selection priority for two years (as compared to the standard one-year period of eligibility). Aside from this longer eligibility period, you should treat these individuals in the same manner as other ICTAP eligibles (5 CFR Part 330).

Citizenship, Veterans' Preference, Age, and Other Requirements

Introduction

In addition to determining which applicants are eligible for selection priority based on career transition plan requirements, you must also review each applicant's eligibility for employment consideration based on citizenship, veterans' preference, age, and other requirements.

Citizenship - Citizenship requirement

No individual may compete for a civil service job unless the individual is a citizen or national of the United States (see 5 CFR section 7.4, 5 CFR Part 338 and 8 U.S.C. § 1408). For more information on citizenship requirements visit: www.opm.gov.

What to do if the applicant is a non-citizen

An individual who is not a citizen or national of the United States may not compete for or be appointed to a position in the competitive service, except when necessary to promote the efficiency of the service, such as when there are no qualified U.S. citizen (see 5 CFR section 7.4.) Therefore, you may not accept applications from non-citizens. If there is a question about an applicant's citizenship (e.g., the applicant failed to answer this question on the application form), the application *may* be accepted and processed. If the individual is subsequently referred on a certificate, you should annotate his/her name with instructions to verify citizenship before appointment. **You must verify citizenship before appointment (5 CFR Part 338).**

Veterans' Preference - When is an applicant entitled to veterans' preference?

Specific instructions for adjudicating veterans' preference and the use of special hiring authorities (e.g., Veterans' Recruitment Act (VRA), Veterans' Employment Opportunities Act (VEOA), 30% compensable veteran, etc.) are contained in OPM's *Federal Employment Policy Handbook: Veterans and the Civil Service* (*VetGuide*). The *VetGuide* provides a comprehensive description of the special rights and privileges that veterans enjoy with respect to Federal employment. You can find the *VetGuide* on OPM's web site at www.opm.gov/veterans.

Special provisions for a new law

Applicants normally apply for veterans' preference-by claiming preference and submitting proof of eligibility at the time of application for a position. There are situations when a new law (such as the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2006) is signed and allows applicants who have not previously claimed preference to contact the examining office where they submitted an application and ask that preference now be granted. Because some applicants will not be aware of the law, examining offices must take the first step in ensuring that applicants receive the preference to which they are entitled. Agencies can ensure consistency in how applicants receive the appropriate preference for which theymay be entitled by applying the following information.

Each delegated examining office is responsible for contacting all current eligibles and reviewing applications in process to ascertain elgibility for veterans' preference under the new law. The review must include eligibles on a Certificate of Eligibles, eligibles on a register/competitor inventory, and applications pending for evaluation.

Eligibles on Certificates: In cases where the certificate was already issued, eligible applicants, who request preeference, who should have received preference based on the new law, and who would have been within reach for appointment on the certificate must receive priority consideration for the next position. If improper certification occurred on a certificate (based on the new law), but no selection was made or the preference eligible affected was not within reach the preference eligible is not entitled to priority consideration.

Eligibles on Registers: The entire inventory of eligibles must be notified to determine eligibility for veterans' preference. The notification letter should inform applicants about the change in law and allow them the opportunity to update their application based on the law and to claim eligibility based on other campaign badges.

For Pending Applications: You must send a letter of inquiry to each applicant to determine if he or she is eligible for veterans' preference. You cannot base your decision on the application that you received in-house because the law is new and may be still unknown to some applicants. Individuals may not have claimed preference and/or failed to write their military service dates on the application.

Designated veterans' preference codes

Use the following codes to designate on rating sheets and certificates the category of veterans' preference to which an applicant is entitled:

CPS 10-Point 30 Percent Compensable Disability Preference based on a service-connected disability of 30% or more;

CP 10-Point Compensable Disability Preference based on a service-connected disability of 10% or more, but less than 30%;

XP 10-Point Disability Preference; granted to recipients of the Purple Heart, persons with a non-compensable service-connected disability (less than 10%);

XP 10-Point Derived Preference; granted to widow/widower or mother of a deceased veteran, or spouse or mother of a disabled veteran;

TP 5-point preference; and

NV designates a non-veteran (this is an optional code that delegated Examining Offices may use; a blank space is also used to designate non-veterans).

When is proof of veterans' preference status required?

Proof of veterans' preference status is required:

- When such status is used as a basis for accepting an application after the closing date;
- When positions are restricted to preference eligibles (i.e., custodian, elevator operator, guard, and messenger positions (see 5 U.S.C. § 3310); or
- Prior to final selection if the preference eligible was selected over other eligibles based on his or her eligibility for veterans' preference.

Age - When is age a factor for determining eligibility?

For most jobs, age is not a factor in determining eligibility for Federal employment. You can obtain an applicant's date of birth when he or she is hired for positions where age is a factor.

Age may be a factor, however, for certain law enforcement, firefighter, air traffic controller, and other positions (see 5 U.S.C. § 3307). Where a job has a maximum or minimum age restriction, the job announcement should clearly state that such a restriction is applicable. In such cases, you should screen the applications for date of birth.

Selective Service - Verifying Selective Service

You are required to verify male applicants' Selective Service registration prior to appointment. Generally, male applicants born after December 31, 1959; who have not registered with the Selective Service are barred from employment in the executive branch of the Federal Government (see 5 CFR Part 300). For more information about registering with the Selective Service visit: www.sss.gov/regist.htm.

Qualifications Requirements

Once you have determined which applicants meet the eligibility requirements described in the previous pages, you can then review the applicants' qualifications.

The purpose of qualifications review is to identify those applicants who meet the minimum requirements necessary to perform satisfactorily on the job. At this point, you are not determining which applicants are the "most qualified" – this will be done later when you assess and rate the qualified applicants (see Chapter 5).

General Schedule positions

In performing qualifications review for General Schedule (GS) positions, you must apply either:

- The requirements set forth in the *Operating Manual: Qualification Standards for General Schedule Positions*;

- The requirements established under a qualifications pilot program; or

- Agency-specific standards that have been approved by OPM.

In any case, the qualification requirements you apply must have been clearly specified in the job announcement (see 5 CFR Part 338 and 5 CFR Part 330).

Reminder: For positions with minimum education requirements, with limited exceptions, only education from institutions which are accredited or preaccredited/candidate for accreditation may be used to meet those requirements. For further information on the acceptability of higher education for meeting minimum qualification requirements, please refer to www.opm.gov/qualifications. For a list of schools which meet these criteria, please refer to http://www.ed.gov.

For detailed information regarding the qualifications review process for GS positions, see the *Operating Manual: Qualification Standards for General Schedule Positions*, which may be found on OPM's web site at www.opm.gov/qualifications.

Wage Grade positions

In performing qualifications review for Wage Grade (WG) positions, you must apply either job elements:

- Set forth in the *Job Qualification System for Trades and Labor Occupations Handbook*, or
- That you have developed, provided that you retain the screen-out elements that are required by the *Job Qualification System for Trades and Labor Occupations Handbook* and use the prescribed rating process and transmutation table.

For detailed information regarding the qualifications review process for WG positions, see www.opm.gov/qualifications/x118-c.

When the applicant does not meet the qualification requirements

If you determine that an applicant does not meet the qualification requirements for the position, you should notify the applicant of your determination. An applicant who does not meet the qualification requirements may not receive further consideration for the position.

Suitability

Suitability refers to identifiable character traits and conduct which are sufficient to determine whether or not an individual is likely to be able to carry out the duties of a Federal job with integrity, efficiency, and effectiveness. Suitability is distinguishable from a person's ability to fulfill the qualification requirements of a job, as measured by experience, education, competencies/KSAs.

It is important to understand the difference between determining an applicant's suitability and determining his qualifications. A person who is well qualified for a position may nonetheless be deemed unsuitable for Federal employment due to a criminal record, drug use, or other consideration.

Section C - References

The following table provides a list of sources pertaining to the topics covered by this section:

Topic	Reference
Competitive service; recommendations of Senators or Representatives	5 U.S.C. § 3303
Competitive service; maximum-age entrance requirements; exceptions	5 U.S.C. § 3307
Nationals but not citizens of the United States at birth	8 U.S.C. § 1408
Citizenship	5 CFR Section 7.4
Employment general	5 CFR Part 300
Agency Career Transition Assistance Plans (CTAP) for local surplus and displaced employees	5 CFR Part 330
Interagency Career Transition Assistance Plan (ICTAP) for Displaced Employees	5 CFR Part 330
Positions restricted to preference eligibles	5 CFR Part 330
Reemployment priority lists (RPL)	5 CFR Part 330
Qualifications Requirements; Citizenship requirements	5 CFR Part 338
Suitability	5 CFR Part 731
Controlling paperwork burdens on the public	5 CFR Part 1320
Operating Manual: Qualification standards for general schedule positions	www.opm.gov/qualifications
Registering with Selective Service System	www.sss.gov/regist.htm.
Federal Employment Policy Handbook: Veterans and the Civil Service (VetGuide)	www.opm.gov/veterans
CTAP/ICTAP Charts	Appendix I

Chapter 5 - Assess Applicants

The basic principles in the examining process are discussed in this chapter. Additionally, the methods and techniques for rating and ranking applicants, the appropriate examining environment, and the documentation required will be presented. This chapter contains the following topics:

Section A   Requirements for Competitive Employment
Section B   Rating the Applicants
Section C   Establishing an Inventory
Section D   References

Section A - Requirements for Competitive Employment

Before you begin to assess applicants, you need to know the basic policies and requirements for competitive employment practices found in 5 CFR Part 300.

5 CFR Part 300

Part 300 requires competitive examinations to:

- Be practical in character and as far as possible relate to matters that fairly test the relative capacity and fitness of candidates for the jobs to be filled;
- Result in selection from among the best qualified candidates;
- Be developed and used without discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, age, handicapping condition, national origin, partisan political affiliation, or other non-merit grounds; and
- Insure to the candidate opportunity for appeal or administrative review, as appropriate.

Part 300 requires that each employment practice of the Federal Government and of individual agencies be based on a job analysis (see Chapter 2, Section B, Conduct Job Analysis). The job analysis identifies:

- The basic duties and responsibilities;
- The competencies/knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) required to perform the duties and responsibilities; and
- The factors that are important in evaluating candidates.

Part 300 also requires that selection procedures comply with the standards established by the *Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures* (29 CFR Part 1607).

See www.uniformguidelines.com to review the complete procedures.

Section B - Rating the Applicants

Introduction

As discussed in Chapter 2, all competencies/KSAs used for selection should meet (through job analysis) two basic requirements. They should be:

- Deemed to be important for successful performance in the position, and
- Required at entry into the position.

Here are the basic steps in the rating and ranking process:

Step 1: Determine minimum qualifications.

Step 2: Identify and apply selective factors and quality ranking factors (if applicable).

Step 3: For applicants who meet minimum qualifications and selective factors requirements, apply the assessment tool to determine the applicant's numerical score/rating.

Step 4: Adjudicate veterans' preference.

Step 5: Rank eligibles in the order of their augmented rating (earned rating plus any veterans' preference).

Note: For Category Rating, steps 4 and 5 of the rating and ranking process are reversed. Category rating procedures are further explained under "Rating Procedure" in this section.

This section contains the following topics:

Minimum Qualification Requirements
Selective Factors
Quality Ranking Factors
Rating Procedure
Documenting the Rating Process

Minimum Qualification Requirements

Introduction

There are certain items that are required, at a minimum, for hiring or promoting an individual into a job under the competitive process. They are typically expressed in terms of job-related years of job-related experience or job-related education, (e.g., course credit hours) or a combination of the two. They may also be expressed as proficiency levels on a competency-based assessment.

Minimum qualification requirements always include the qualification standards that OPM validates and sets for occupations in the Federal Government. Such qualification standards usually apply Governmentwide, but occasionally some are established as agency-specific standards. In addition, minimum qualification requirements may also include any selective factors an agency establishes and applies for its positions. These general occupational qualification standards and selective factors are discussed further below.

Applicants are first screened to determine whether they meet the minimum qualification requirements. This is called an "in" or "out" decision, or a "screen out." Applicants who pass this initial screening continue on in the assessment process.

The role of minimum requirements in the assessment process

Minimum requirements are intended to reduce the processing of unqualified applicants by screening out those who are unlikely to succeed in the job. The qualification standards OPM issues are *not* designed to rank applicants, identify the best qualified candidates for particular positions, or otherwise substitute for a comprehensive assessment of job qualifications. Applicants who satisfy minimum requirements are not automatically entitled to a qualifying score of 70 or more points, out of 100, in an assessment process that uses a numerical rating procedure (see "Rating Procedures").

Minimum qualifications screening and subsequent assessment are two separate steps in the examining process. Screening for minimum qualifications is usually the first hurdle in the selection process. The first step is to sort applicants into two groups: ineligible and eligible. Applicants who do not meet the minimum qualification requirements are ineligible and thus "screened out."

When the examining process uses numerical rating procedures, applicants meeting minimum requirements are eligible for assessment of their relative qualifications "on a scale of 100" (see 5 CFR 337.101(a) for further details). When the examining process uses alternative rating procedures, applicants meeting minimum requirements are eligible for assessment and placement in quality categories. Only those who pass both the initial minimum qualifications screen and the assessment phase are eligible for appointment.

Occupational Qualification Standards

Introduction

OPM has the responsibility to develop, validate and publish the occupational qualification standards that must be used when examining applicants for appointment to the competitive service. Together with any applicable selective factors, which are discussed below, these occupational qualification standards make up the minimum qualification requirements.

Where to find the current occupational qualification standards

The current Governmentwide minimum qualification standards including most agency-specific standards are published on OPM's web site.

For General Schedule positions, the minimum qualification standards are located in the *Operating Manual for Qualification Standards for General Schedule Positions* at www.opm.gov/qualifications.

For Wage Grade positions, the minimum qualification standards are located in the *Job Qualification System for Trades and Labor Occupations Handbook* at www.opm.gov/qualifications/x-118c/index.htm.

Written test screening

When it is required that an applicant pass a written test that is required by an occupational qualification standard or most agency-specific standard, the examining office has the option as to when it wants to screen the applicants. In choosing the right option, the examining office should consider the volume of applications received the high cost of administering a written test, the efficiency of the process, etc.

IF the screening is…	THEN…
before the written test is administered	only those applicants who meet the minimum qualification requirements including any selective placement factors, need to be tested.
after the written test is administered	only those applicants who pass the written test need to be screened further for minimum qualification requirements.

The role of minimum requirements in the scoring process

Applicants who satisfy minimum requirements are not automatically entitled to a qualifying score of 70 or more points, out of 100, in the assessment process. Minimum requirements are intended to reduce the processing of unqualified applicants by screening out those who are unlikely to succeed in the job. OPM qualification standards are *not* designed to rank applicants, identify the best qualified candidates for particular positions, or otherwise substitute for a comprehensive assessment of job qualifications.

Minimum qualifications screening and subsequent assessment are two separate steps in the examining process. Screening for minimum qualifications is the first hurdle in the selection process. The first step is to sort applicants into two groups: ineligible and eligible. Applicants who do not meet the minimum qualification requirements are ineligible and thus "screened out." Applicants meeting minimum requirements are eligible for assessment of their relative qualifications "on a scale of 100" (see 5 CFR 337.101(a) for further details). Only those who pass both the initial minimum qualifications screen and the assessment phase are eligible for appointment.

Where to find the current qualifications standards

The current Governmentwide minimum qualification standards and most agency-specific standards are published on OPM's web site at www.opm.gov/qualifications.

For General Schedule positions, the minimum qualification standards are located in the *Operating Manual for Qualification Standards for General Schedule Positions.*

For Wage Grade positions, the minimum qualification standards are located in the *Job Qualification System for Trades and Labor Occupations Handbook.*

Selective Factors

In addition to the component of the minimum qualification requirements that is expressed as occupational qualification standards, selective factors identify any qualifications that are also important for the job. These are already required when the person starts the job.

Characteristics of a selective factor

Characteristics of a selective factor include:

- Extensive training or experience to develop;
- Essential for successful performance on the job, (i.e., if individuals do not have the selective factor, they cannot perform the job);
- Almost always are geared toward a specific technical competency/KSA; and
- Cannot be learned on the job in a "reasonable" amount of time.

When using selective factors, you should specify the required proficiency level. Based on their characteristics, selective factors can be used as a "screen out" – that is, if an applicant does not meet a selective factor he/she is ineligible for further consideration.

Example of a selective factor

A commonly applied selective factor is a special language requirement. Learning a language involves several years of training and for certain positions, a person cannot perform successfully unless he or she can communicate in a second language. In addition, applicants cannot compensate for a lower language proficiency level with higher levels of proficiency on other competencies. In these types of situations, it is appropriate to apply a special language requirement as a selective factor. Because selective factors are used as "screen outs," you should take all of these conditions into consideration when you identify selective factors that appropriately limit applicant consideration. For more information on establishing a proficiency level, see Chapter 2, Indicators of Proficiency.

Documenting selective factors

You may establish selective factors for any position without OPM's approval except when using a single gender as a selective placement factor (see Chapter 6, Section A, Positions Restricted to One Gender.) However, you should establish and document these selective factors through the job analysis process (see Appendix G) by identifying:

- The competencies/KSAs basic to and essential for satisfactory performance of the job;
- The duties or tasks the incumbent will perform that require the possession of the requested competencies/KSAs; and
- The education, experience, or other qualifications that provide evidence of the possession of the competencies/KSAs (optional).

If you cannot document a selective factor as enhancing the candidates' ability, you can use it as a quality ranking factor (see Quality Ranking Factors).

Quality Ranking Factors

Quality ranking factors are competencies/KSAs that are expected to enhance performance in a position. But unlike selective factors, they are not used as "screen out" factors.

You should plainly identify quality ranking factors in the job announcement to make applicants clearly understand the basis on which they are being rated.

Identifying characteristics of a quality ranking factor

You may rank applicants with higher proficiency levels above those with lower proficiency levels on a quality ranking factor, but you cannot rate qualified applicants ineligible solely for failure to possess a quality ranking factor. With quality ranking factors, the focus is on the level of proficiency the applicant brings to the job. Applicants with higher proficiency levels should perform better on the job.

Assessment process

Typically, the assessment process will involve measuring between four and eight competencies or KSAs. This process produces a result that is used to rank order and identify applicants who are most likely to be the best performers on the job. Applicants who pass the initial minimum qualifications and selective factor(s) screen outs are rated on the quality ranking factors to produce a rank (score) order or quality category list of eligible candidates.

You may use a selective factor as a quality ranking factor as well, if applicants have varied levels of proficiency on the selective factor.

Documentation

Like selective factors, your quality ranking factors should be identified and documented through the job analysis process (see Appendix G).

Rating Procedures

Introduction

Two general types of rating procedures are available to assess applicants and develop lists of eligible candidates:

- Numerical rating procedures
- Alternative rating procedures

You have three numerical rating procedures available for rating applicants:

- Rank and Select Using Numerical Test Scores;
- Rank and Select Using A-C-E (Quality level Rating); and
- Rank and Select Using Education/Training and Experience (Generic Rating).

Each of the numerical rating procedures produces a score on a 100-point scale.

You also have an alternative rating procedure available for ranking and selecting applicants:

- Category Rating.

Numerical Rating Procedures

A-C-E or Quality Level Rating

The **A-C-E or Quality Level Rating** procedure combines an applicant's total qualifying experience and education/training into a single quality level rating. It also provides for assigning additional points, on the basis of an evaluation of the applicant in terms of specific competencies/KSAs that are important for successful performance of the duties of the position. This procedure uses three quality levels.

Definition of quality levels

Each quality level is defined in terms of increasing levels of difficulty or complexity. For example, you may define the quality levels as:

A = Exceptional experience for the position for which the applicant is being considered.

C = Good experience for the position for which the applicant is being considered.

E = Minimally qualifying experience for the position for which the applicant is being considered.

Example of quality levels

In this example, applicants are assigned points based on their quality level:

> 90 points = Typically assigned to applicants at the "A" quality level
> 80 points = Assigned to applicants at the "C" quality level
> 70 points = Typically equated with minimum qualification, "E" quality level

You should define quality levels broadly, as shown above, because applicants may have a wide variety of job-related experiences and training that you need to consider in determining the appropriate quality level.

Additional points to augment the rating

In cases where you have a large number of applicants with tied scores within a quality level, you should refine the scores by assigning additional points to the quality level score (i.e., A - C - E levels) of each applicant. You can achieve this by using job-related competencies/KSAs.

You may use quality ranking factors to break tied scores by assigning points based on the applicant's proficiency levels on the competencies/KSAs. However, when there are only a few applicants in the quality level(s) being considered, you may use a tie breaking procedure for selection among applicants within a quality level (see Chapter 6, Section B for Tie Breaking Procedures).

Generic Ratings

The second third numerical rating procedure is the **Generic Rating** Procedure. In some cases, based on occupational analyses, you will find that several positions have the same minimum qualification and general competency/KSA requirements, differing primarily with respect to the technical specialty areas. This happens most often with entry-level positions.

Example of generic ratings

Entry-level engineering positions have the same basic minimum qualifications and general competency/KSA requirements. However, the specialty or specialized experience required varies by series such as Electronic Engineering or Mechanical Engineering.

In these situations, you may choose to use a **common set of quality level definitions** to assign applicants to a quality level and then use a quality ranking factor to assess specialized training or experience relevant to the position to assign additional points within a quality level.

Maximum number of allowable points per quality level

The A-C-E and the Generic Rating numeric rating procedures allow the same maximum number of additional points for each quality level. These points can be added to an applicant's quality level score as long as the additional points, with the exception of veterans' preference, do not raise the applicant's rating to the next rating level.

For quality levels "E" and "C", the maximum number of points a rating could be augmented is 9 points. For quality level "A", a rating can be augmented by 10 points because doing so will not raise the applicant to a higher quality level.

Applying veterans' preference

After you determine the final earned rating of the applicant, you then add veterans' preference points for the final numerical rating. For information on ordering eligibles on a certificate, see Chapter 6, Order of Certification.

Category Rating Procedures

Category rating is a ranking and selection procedure authorized under the Chief Human Capital Officers Act of 2002 (Title XIII of the Homeland Security Act of 2002) and codified at 5 U.S.C. § 3319. Category rating is part of the competitive examining process. Under category rating, applicants who meet basic minimum qualification requirements established for the position and whose job-related competencies/KSAs or knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs) have been assessed are ranked by being placed in one of two or more predefined quality categories instead of being ranked in numeric score order. Preference eligibles are listed ahead of non-preference eligibles within each quality category. Veterans' preference is absolute within each quality category.

Job announcement requirement

Under 5 CFR part 337, subpart C, you are required to describe each quality category in your job announcements. You must use the "Basis of Rating" section to communicate to applicants that category rating procedures will be used to rank and select eligible candidates. Agencies are not expected to disclose crediting plans and/or rating schedules with scoring keys. Quality category descriptions can be as simple as naming the categories such as, "Highly Qualified and Qualified" or "Highly-Qualified, Well-Qualified, and Qualified". In addition, you must clearly describe how veterans' preference is applied under category rating procedures.

Agency responsibilities

To use category rating procedures, an agency must fulfill certain requirements, both generally and with respect to filling specific positions.

1. **Agencies are required to meet the following general requirements:**

   - Establish a category rating policy that identifies the requirements for implementing category rating for all competitive positions in the agency; and
   - For the first 3 years after establishing the category rating policy, submit an annual report to Congress and OPM (see below).

2. **Agencies are required to meet the following requirements when filling a position:**

   - Define each quality category through job analysis (see Appendix G) conducted in accordance with the *"Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures."* Each category must have a clear definition that distinguishes it from other categories;
   - Describe each quality category in the job announcement and apply the provisions in 5 CFR 330, subparts B, F, and G; and
   - Place applicants into categories based upon their job-related competencies/KSAs; and
   - Establish documentation and record keeping procedures for reconstruction purposes.

Defining quality categories

In category rating, you must establish and define a minimum of two quality categories. Quality categories should be written to reflect the requirements to perform the job successfully and to distinguish differences in the quality of candidates' job-related competencies/KSAs. Each quality category will have eligible candidates who have demonstrated, through an assessment tool(s), similar levels of proficiency on the critical job-related competencies/KSAs.

Quality categories must be established and defined by the employing agency prior to announcing the job. Some factors to consider when defining quality categories may include:

   - Breadth and scope of competencies/KSAs;
   - Increased levels of difficulty or complexity of competencies/KSAs;
   - Successful performance on the job; and
   - Level of the job.

You may use test scores as part of the job-related criteria to place eligible candidates into quality categories, as long as the test assesses job-related competencies/KSAs. When defining quality categories using numerical scores, you must be consistent with the technical standards in the *Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures* (see 29 CFR part 1607, section 14) with respect to the development of any applicant assessment procedure. You must also comply

with the laws, regulations, and policies of merit selection (see [5 U.S.C. § 2301](#) and [5 U.S.C. § 2302](#)).

When using scores from the Administrative Careers With America (ACWA) assessment for ACWA positions, your agency should coordinate with its legal office on the implementation of your agency's category rating system.

Examples of quality categories

Categories are established relative to how qualified an applicant is. You may not establish a "not qualified" category in category rating. Only those found qualified will be placed in a category.

Example 1	Example 2	Example 3
Highly-Qualified	Highly-Qualified	Highly-Qualified
Qualified	Well-Qualified	Well-Qualified
		Qualified

Example using two quality categories

Human Resources (HR) Specialist (Staffing), GS-201-14, position in an agency headquarters policy office.

- **Highly qualified** – Senior HR Specialist in an agency headquarters office with experience writing regulations or agency policy or providing guidance on staffing, downsizing, realignments, classification, or compensation.

- **Qualified** – Senior HR Specialist with operations experience in staffing, downsizing, realignments, classification, or compensation.

Example using more than two quality categories

The following example illustrates one way you can define quality categories. This illustration shows how you can define your quality categories for an Accountant, series 510 at the 12 grade level.

Step 1: Use the job analysis process to identify job-related competencies/KSAs. The following three competencies/KSAs were identified through the job analysis process to be job-related; for example:

1. Oral Communication;
2. Technical Knowledge; and
3. Project Management.

Step 2: Identify the indicators of proficiency for each of the competencies/KSAs identified in Step 1:

1. Oral Communication
   - Makes presentations
   - Answers technical questions

2. Technical Knowledge
   - Financial analysis

- Accounting

3. Project Management
   - Reviews budget cycles
   - Uses project management software

Step 3: Identify level of proficiency required by the level of the position:

- Based on *demonstrating possession only* of the competencies/KSAs (applicant's specific level of proficiency does not matter); or
- Based on *specific level of proficiency* for each competency/KSA (applicant's specific level of proficiency in each competency/KSA does matter).

Example (Possession Only): Accountant, Series 510, Grade 12

Categories	Required Competencies/KSAs
Highly-Qualified	Oral Communication Technical Knowledge Project Management
Well-Qualified	Oral Communication Technical Knowledge
Qualified	Technical Knowledge

Example (Specific Level): Accountant, Series 510, Grade 12

Oral Communication

Proficiency Level	Proficiency Level Definition
5	Communicates or explains *complex* ideas or information clearly.
3	Communicates or explains *moderately complex* ideas or information clearly.
1	Communicates or explains *basic ideas* or information clearly.

You can use this format to develop specific proficiency levels for the remaining two competencies/KSAs, (Technical Knowledge and Project Management).

After defining the specific proficiency levels for each of the competencies/KSAs, you can define the quality categories. A possible illustration follows:

Category Definition

Highly-Qualified	Eligibles who have demonstrated a proficiency level of "5" in Technical Knowledge; "5" in Project Management; and a minimum of "3" in Oral Communication.
Well-Qualified	Eligibles who have demonstrated a proficiency level of at least "3" in all three competencies/KSAs.
Qualified	Eligibles who meet basic minimum qualification requirements established for the position, but fail to meet the Well-Qualified category definition.

Example of an inappropriate quality category

There are factors where more is not better, and should not be used to define categories.

An agency is seeking to fill a job that requires an employee to lift 40 pounds. Candidate A can lift 70 pounds and Candidate B can lift 45 pounds.

Because both candidates have the necessary strength to meet the lifting requirements of the job, they are indistinguishable with respect to this factor. Candidate A should not be put into a higher category than Candidate B just because Candidate A can lift more weight.

Ranking eligibles

Applicants who meet the basic minimum qualification requirements established for the position (i.e., OPM-established occupational standards, plus any selective factors) *and* whose job-related competencies or KSAs have been assessed are ranked by being placed in one of the pre-defined quality categories instead of being ranked in numeric score order. Names of eligible candidates may be listed in any order (for example, alphabetical order), subject to the requirement, described below, that preference eligibles must be listed ahead of non-preference eligibles.

Applying veterans' preference

The qualified candidates assigned to a category are not given numeric ratings (scores); therefore, preference eligibles **DO NOT** receive points, as prescribed by 5 U.S.C. § 3309.

You will identify the qualified preference eligibles and then apply veterans' preference by listing preference eligibles ahead of above non-preference eligibles within the same quality category in which they were assigned based upon the job-related assessment tools(s). No points are assigned under category rating. Qualified preference eligibles with a compensable service-connected disability of 30-percent or more (CPS) and those with a compensable service-connected disability of at least 10-percent but less than 30-percent (CP) move from the category in which they were would otherwise be placed to the top of the highest quality category (except for scientific or professional positions at the GS-9 level or higher). As a reminder, a selecting official may not pass over a preference eligible to select a non-preference eligible unless there are grounds for passing over the preference eligible and the agency has complied with the pass over procedures at 5 U.S.C. § 3318.

Order of certification under category rating

For most jobs and grade levels under category rating, the Certificate of Eligibles, or equivalent, certifies eligibles in the following order:

1. Interagency Career Transition Assistance Program (ICTAP) eligibles;
2. Eligibles who lost consideration due to erroneous certification;
3. Eligibles in highest quality category; and
4. Eligibles in the next lower quality categories, as needed.

Names referred to selecting official

You may list the names of eligible candidates on the Certificate of Eligibles in any order (for example, alphabetical order) as long as preference eligibles are listed ahead of non-preference eligibles. The "rule of three" procedures do not apply under category rating. When providing the Certificate of Eligibles to the selecting official, you must:

- *Certify all eligible candidates in the highest quality category*; or
- If there are fewer than three eligible candidates in the highest quality category and you decide to merge the highest quality category with the next lower category, *certify all eligible candidates in the newly merged category because it becomes the highest quality category.*

Merging categories

If there are fewer than three candidates in the highest quality category, you have the option of combining (merging) the top two quality categories and making selections from the newly merged category. The newly merged category is the new highest quality category. Preference eligibles must be placed listed ahead of non-preference eligibles in the newly merged category.

As long as a preference eligible remains in the merged category, the selecting official may not select a non-preference eligible unless the selecting official obtains approval to pass over the preference eligible in accordance with 5 U.S.C. § 3318.

There is no limit to the number of times you can merge categories. The number of times you can merge categories is restricted only by the number of categories you establish.

Again, merging is not mandatory. The human resources specialist should consult with the selecting official to decide whether to merge the top two quality categories. Merging is an option available to the human resources specialist and the selecting official at two places in the hiring process. Merging quality categories is an option **before**:

- **Certifying/Issuing a Certificate of Eligibles** - a human resources specialist, in consultation with the selecting official, has the option to merge the highest quality category with the next lower quality category **before issuing a certificate**, if there are fewer than three eligible candidates in the highest quality category; and/or

- **Selecting an Eligible** – a selecting official, in consultation with the human resources specialist, has the option to merge the highest quality category with the next lower quality category, if there are fewer than three available eligible candidates in the highest quality category from whom to make a selection.

As a reminder, refer to your agency's category rating policy related to merging categories, in accordance with 5 CFR part 337, subpart C.

Example of merging categories before issuing a certificate

If your highest quality category (Highly-Qualified) has fewer than three eligible candidates, you and the selecting official may decide to merge the highest quality category (Highly-Qualified) with the next lower quality category (Well-Qualified) before issuing the Certificate of Eligibles. The newly merged category is now your highest quality category (Highly-Qualified) and contains all eligible candidates in any order (for example, alphabetical order) from both categories. Because a preference eligible was in the Well-Qualified category, you must now place list the preference eligible at the top of the newly merged highest quality category. See below.

Illustration of merging before issuing a certificate

Highly-Qualified James John (NV) Peter Wolf (NV)	Newly Merged Highly-Qualified Lisa James (TP) Jackie Downs (NV) James John (NV) Harry Upton (NV) Peter Wolf (NV)
Well-Qualified Lisa James (TP) Harry Upton (NV) Jackie Downs (NV)	
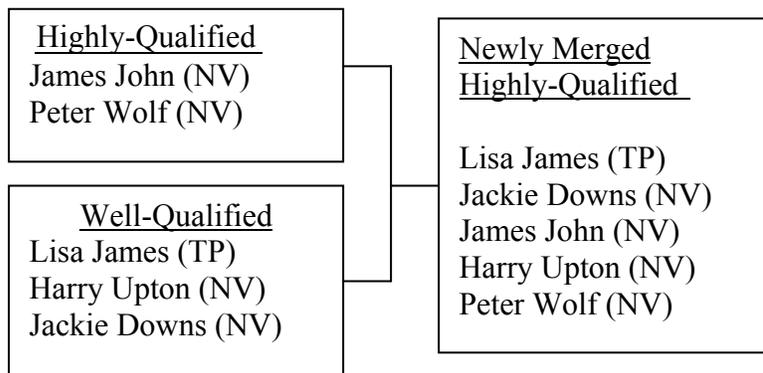
Note: Merging the highest quality category (Highly-Qualified) with the next lower category (Well-Qualified) requires listing the qualified preference eligible at the top of the newly merged quality category.

Example of merging before selecting an eligible

Your selecting official needs to fill five positions. The selecting official selects three eligible candidates from the highest quality category (Highly-Qualified) containing five non-preference eligible candidates. The highest quality category now contains only two eligible candidates. Because the selecting official would like to make additional selections, a decision is made to merge the highest quality category with the next lower quality category (Well-Qualified) to increase the number of eligible candidates from which the selecting official can choose.

In the Well-Qualified category, there are two preference eligibles and two non-preference eligibles. Combining (merging) the two quality categories (Highly-Qualified and Well-Qualified) produces a newly merged highest quality category containing the names of the two remaining non-preference eligibles from the Highly-Qualified category and two preference eligibles and two non-preference eligibles from the Well-Qualified category. In the newly merged category, all preference eligibles are placed ahead of all non-preference eligibles. A non-preference eligible may not be selected over a preference eligible without submitting a pass over request and obtaining prior approval from OPM or the agency, depending on the basis for the pass over request. For reconstruction purposes, the human resources specialist documents any selections made prior to the merge, including the date, and documents the date the categories are merged. See illustration below.

Illustration of merging before selecting an eligible

<table>
<tr><td>

Highly-Qualified Category

Peter Taylor (CP)   *(Selected)*
Michael Jones (NV)
Quince Lopez (NV)
Sam Smith (NV)   *(Selected)*
Troy Wilson (NV)   *(Selected)*

</td><td>

Newly Merged Category
(Dated June 15, 2006)

Highly-Qualified Category

Anne Ramsay   (TP)
David Sanders   (TP)
Homer Curtis   (NV)
Michael Jones   (NV)
Quince Lopez   (NV)

</td></tr>
<tr><td>

Well-Qualified Category

Anne Ramsay   (TP)
David Sanders   (TP)
Homer Curtis   (NV)

</td><td></td></tr>
</table>
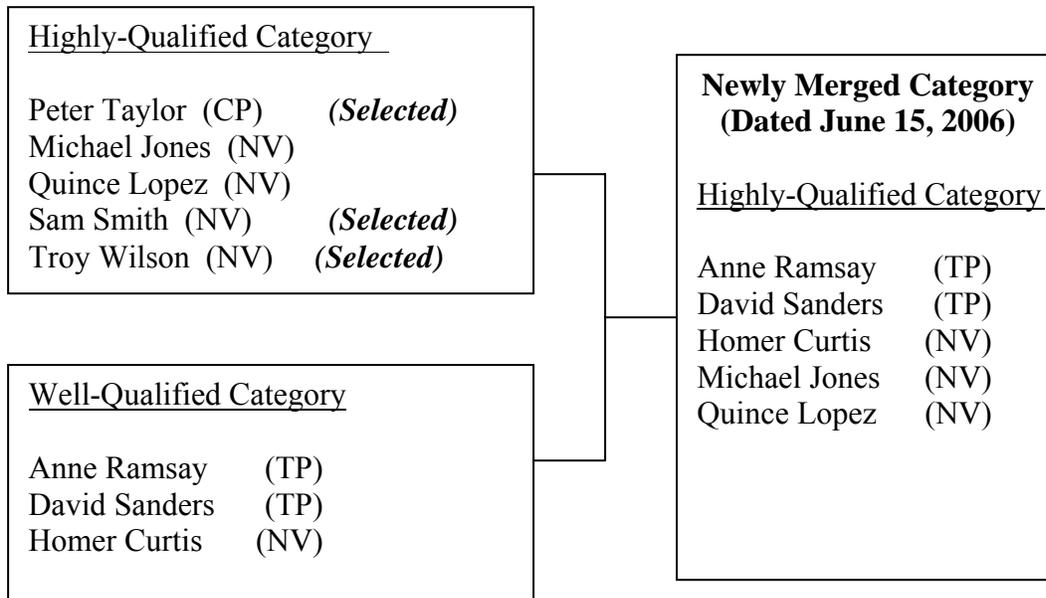
Selection procedures

A selecting official may select any eligible candidate(s) in the highest quality category; except, the selecting official may not select a non-preference eligible over a preference eligible unless the agency submits a request to pass over the preference eligible in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 3318, and the request is approved. If there are **only** preference eligibles or **only** non-preference eligibles in the highest quality category, the selecting official may select any eligible candidate in the highest quality category regardless of the number of eligible candidates. But, if there is a combination of preference eligibles and non-preference eligibles in the highest quality category, the selecting official cannot select a non-preference eligible over a preference eligible without submitting a request to pass over the preference eligible and obtaining approval.

Any selection made by the selecting official prior to merging the highest quality category with the next lower quality category is a valid and legal appointment. The name of the selectee is removed from the highest quality category and the individual's name does not appear in the newly merged highest quality category. For reconstruction purposes, it is important that the selecting official or the human resources specialist document any selections made prior to the merge, including the date, and document the date the categories were merged.

Summary

In summary, a selecting official:

- May select eligible candidates from the highest quality category, **or**
- May select eligible candidates from a newly merged category comprised of the highest and the second-highest quality categories, if fewer than three candidates were placed in the highest quality category; **and**
- May not pass over a preference eligible in the same quality category from which a selection is made, unless the requirements of 5 U.S.C. § 3318(b) are satisfied. In other words, you must select preference eligibles unless you submit a pass over request based on reasons stated in Chapter 6, Section D of this Handbook, issued under 5 CFR 332.406, *and* the request is approved by OPM or your agency, as appropriate. Your agency headquarters is responsible for establishing pass over procedures for all preference eligibles except those for which OPM has responsibility. Your agency pass over procedures should be the same as those used for the traditional rating, ranking, and selection procedure.

The "three consideration" rule embodied in 5 CFR 332.405 does not apply in category rating. The reference to "three considerations" in 5 U.S.C. § 3317(b) is associated with the traditional process for the discontinuance of certification of preference eligibles from a register, and only applies to category rating in that limited context.

Reporting requirements for category rating

The Chief Human Capital Officers Act authorized category rating as an alternative ranking and selection procedures also established special reporting requirements for category rating. Each agency that establishes a category rating system must submit a report to Congress in each of the 3 years following that establishment (5 U.S.C. § 3319(d)). Agencies must send their annual reports to the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate. In accordance with 5 U.S.C. § 3319(d), the report must include the:

1. Number of employees hired under category rating;
2. Impact category rating has had on the hiring of veterans and minorities, including those who are American Indian or Alaska Natives, Asian, Black or African American, and native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islanders; and
3. Way in which managers were trained in the administration of category rating.

In accordance with 5 CFR 337.305, an agency that uses category ranking must forward to OPM a copy of the same annual report submitted to Congress. The report must be mailed to:

> U.S. Office of Personnel Management
> Associate Director
> Employee Services
> 1900 E Street, NW., Room 6500
> Washington, DC 20415

Documenting the Rating Process

It is a good work practice to document your entire rating process. Documentation provides the rationale for the rating procedure and sufficient information to enable reconstruction of the process used in conducting the rating procedure. You should keep the actual documentation record in the examination file (for case examining) or as a separate file identified by the occupation and referencing any inventory (register) for which it was used.

Most documentation occurs while developing a rating procedure, so you should maintain a file during the process. This eliminates problems that often occur when past events have to be reconstructed from memory or incomplete notes. It can also help you identify subject matter experts (SMEs) who were involved in the rating process. You can prepare summaries indicating who was contacted, when, questions asked, and replies received. This approach helps with both the convenience and comprehensiveness of the rating process.

Materials for documenting the file

Your documentation file should include the following information:

- Position descriptions or any other material gathered to identify the task and competency requirements of the position;

- The job analysis results (i.e., tasks, competencies/KSAs, and task-competency linkages), the quality level definitions, any selective factors identified, and other criteria used to distinguish qualifications through the assessment process. If any other rating, ranking, or weighting of competencies/KSAs is made, you should maintain this information and its basis;

- A copy of the actual rating procedure used in accordance with 5 CFR Part 300. Also, include transmutation tables used to transmute raw scores to ratings between 70 and 100, if applicable (see Appendix J, Transmutation Tables for General Schedule Positions);

- Reference to the OPM occupational qualification standard applied or a copy of the OPM-approved standard if it is different from the OPM qualification standard. Raters' initials and dates of qualification determinations for each applicant;

- A copy of the supplemental application form, if developed. (OMB must approve supplemental forms and the forms must contain Privacy Act Information if the information is being collected from the general public (see 5 CFR Part 1320));

- Tie-breaking method developed from job-related criteria, if used; and

- Identification of those SMEs and human resource professionals who participated in the development and application of the examining plan (i.e., name, title, series, and grade).

Section C - Establishing an Inventory

There are two types of examining processes available for use by an agency when filling a job. You may fill a job either by announcing the position through "case examining" or through a competitor inventory.

The basic concept of case examining is to issue a job announcement for the immediate filling of a specific job(s), and close the case file when the selection process is completed. A competitor inventory provides a list of interested and qualified applicants ready to be certified for current and future vacancies. Before you make a decision as to which process to use, you may want to review and consider the advantages and disadvantages of each.

Types of Examining Processes	Advantages	Disadvantages
Case Examining	• Competencies/KSAs are tailored to the job • Applicants are available because they applied for the specific job	• Time delays in issuing a certificate because each job must be announced • Applicants must apply for each position unless otherwise stated in the job announcement
Competitor Inventory	• Speed of referral • Applicant applies only once and is assured consideration for recurring jobs	• High applicant unavailability rate over a period of time • Continual maintenance is required

This section contains the following topics:

- Case Examining
- Competitor Inventory
- Maintaining a Competitor Inventory
- Terminating or Combining Inventories
- Issuing Notices of Results
- Reconsideration of Rating

Case Examining

The basic concept of case examining is to conduct targeted recruitment, issue a job announcement for the immediate filling of a specific job(s), and close a case file when the selection process is completed. It is an effective technique for filling a job because the job seeker applies directly for a specific job and is rated and ranked using job-related competencies/KSAs.

Special handling of a preference eligible's application

You must ensure a 10-point preference eligible's entitlement under 5 U.S.C. § 3305 to file an application at anytime for an examination for any position to which an appointment was made within the preceding three (3) years.

In addition, 5 CFR Part 332 identifies the conditions for accepting an application from a 10-point preference eligible. The 10-point preference eligible's application must be accepted for any position for which a:

1. Non-temporary appointment has been made in the preceding three years;
2. List of eligibles currently exists but is closed to new applicants; or
3. List of eligibles is about to be established.

Under case examining, we recommend that when you receive a preference eligible's application, you:

- Review your records to identify any non-temporary appointments made in the preceding three years; and
- Compare the preference eligible's application against the title, series, grade, and duty location of the position identified in your review. If the records are inconclusive as to the similarity of the positions, you must give the preference eligible the benefit of the doubt, and accept the application.

If the preference eligible applies for a specific position, meets the qualifications of the position, and is within reach for referral for the position, the examining office must ensure that the preference eligible is referred on the certificate as soon as possible.

If no job announcement is open and you receive a 10-point preference eligible's application, you should establish procedures for handling the application in compliance with 5 U.S.C. § 3305. You should inform the preference eligible of these procedures as well as the status of his or her application.

Issuing certificates

Case examining procedures involve a one-time-only action with no expectation of filling other vacancies at a later date. You have the option of sending the selecting official:

- The minimum number of eligibles, (i.e., three eligible names);
- All the qualified eligible names; or
- An appropriate number of eligible names based on past experience with the occupation (more than three names per vacancy but less than all).

The number of eligibles to be certified is flexible. If the selecting official needs additional names to consider, you may send all the remaining names or the next three eligible names (see Chapter 6, Section B, Creating a Certificate of Eligibles or Number of Names Certified).

Three considerations under traditional rating and ranking procedures

If an eligible was considered and non-selected from a certificate from which three valid selections were made, you may eliminate the eligible from further consideration on that certificate. Each time a job is announced on a case examining basis, the same eligible has the right to be considered for the position again even if he or she was considered three times for a previous case examining certificate.

Documentation

To ensure a complete audit trail, you should document the case file or card file/automated system to show that the 10-point file was checked, and then you should document the names of any preference eligibles whose applications were pulled from the file and to whom additional material was sent.

When the established retention period has expired, you may dispose of applications in accordance with records retention and disposition schedule instructions in Appendix C.

Competitor Inventory

As an alternative to case examining, you may wish to establish a competitor inventory. This type of inventory is also referred to as a "standing competitor inventory," "standing register," or "register." For the purpose of this section, the term "competitor inventory" will be used.

A competitor inventory is usually established when positions in an occupation are frequently filled with non-status candidates and it is not efficient to recruit and examine for each job filled. A competitor inventory provides a list of interested and qualified applicants ready to be certified for current and future vacancies.

Definition

A competitor inventory is a rank-ordered list of eligibles who meet one set of qualification requirements, have passed at least one assessment and are available to be considered for:

- One or more grade levels;
- One or more occupational specialties;
- At one or more geographical locations; and
- Various employment conditions identified on the job announcement, such as, travel, night or shift work.

Types of inventories

There are two types of competitor inventories:

Pre-rated inventory is a list of eligibles who have been rated and ranked and placed in rank order, by option and by grade. This type of listing has traditionally been called a register, and applications are referred to as being "pre-rated" or "front-end rated."

Deferred-rated inventory is a list of applicants in alphabetical or identification number order. The list includes options and grades for which the applicants are considered. Although there may be an initial screening for basic qualifications, applications are rated only when a certificate is requested for a specific job. Typically, the rating is valid only for that specific position.

Requirements for establishing a competitor inventory

When establishing a competitor inventory, you should record and maintain the following basic information to make it possible to reconstruct the history of a competitor inventory:

- Examination title and number;
- Position, grade and geographic area covered;
- Date the inventory was established; and
- Disposition of other competitor inventories, which the new one may have superseded.

Date of establishment

The date for establishing the competitor inventory depends on the length of time that the job announcement is open.

IF a job announcement is open…	THEN the date of establishment is the date…
For a limited period	Of the first certificate issued from the inventory.
Continuously	When the first eligible applicant is entered into the inventory.

In either case, if the public notice says that all those who apply by a certain date are considered first, then the applicants from the first group are entered onto the inventory at the same time, and those who apply later are entered as they are rated.

Period of eligibility for a competitor inventory

The applicant's period of eligibility is based on your need for the competitor inventory. Typically, the period of eligibility lasts for one year; however, you may set a shorter time period.

It is important to note the date of an applicant's entry onto the competitor inventory, because this is the date from which the length of the period of consideration is determined.

Requests for additional information

You may establish the competitor inventory without waiting for applicants to respond to requests for additional information. However, you should make this fact known to the applicants from whom you are seeking additional information. If it appears that the number of incomplete forms is very large, you may delay selections from the certificate until you receive the additional information or until the deadline for additional information has passed.

Pre-rated inventory

When establishing a pre-rated standing inventory, it should contain a complete record of the applicant's eligibility. For each applicant on the inventory, you may use a register card, an automated data record, or other non-automated approach. Generally, a separate record is prepared for each position, grade, and option for which an applicant is eligible. The record should contain the following information:

- The eligible applicant's rating, including appropriate veterans' preference points and symbol (CP, CPS, XP, TP). If the examination includes a written test, the part scores are recorded if part scores exist;

- The job specialty in which the applicant has been rated eligible. If separate register cards are made for each grade, option, or position, you may wish to post only rating, grade, etc., at the top of the card and annotate the bottom of the card with the other grades and options for cross reference purposes;

- Examination number. This is the public notice or announcement number;

- Identification number. If the applications are filed numerically, record the application number. Record each applicant's social security number, if it will be used to break ties;

- Date of entry (registration date) onto the competitor inventory;

- Other eligibilities. When separate cards are prepared for each option and grade, you may want to list at the bottom of the card all other eligible ratings, grades, options, or positions resulting from the same application;

- Special notations. Note any limitations or modifications of eligibility, (e.g., subject to completion of a 4-year college degree). In a card system, you would typically note this at the bottom of the card; and

- If the application was accepted after the closing date, annotate the register card to show the reason for acceptance, e.g., "Reopened" or "Delayed."

Deferred-rated inventory

You may use an automated or electronic file to maintain your inventory. It may contain a single entry following the applicant's name or a separate listing for each grade or occupational specialty. The file may also include:

- Appropriate preference symbol (CPS, CP, XP, TP) if applicable;

- Application number if you will file the qualifications statements numerically;

- Examination/announcement number;

- Date of entry onto the competitor inventory; and

- Any limitation on eligibility (e.g., meeting maximum entry age requirements) or availability (e.g., geographic, nature of employment, willingness to travel).

Notice of receipt of application

We suggest sending a notice or letter to each applicant confirming your examining office's receipt of the applicant's application. The notice should include the following information:

- Title and number of the examination;
- Name of the issuing office;
- Date of issue; and
- Positions, options, and grades covered by the inventory.

It should also describe how the applicant will receive consideration. The notice should clearly state that it is not a notice of rating or a determination of eligibility. However, some deferred-rated examinations may provide for a general screening and rating of qualifications. You should include this determination/rating in the notice of receipt of application.

Maintaining a Competitor Inventory

Period of eligibility on a competitor inventory

The period of eligibility for an individual on a competitor inventory is established when developing the examination plan.

You should inform the applicant how long his/her eligibility is valid and how to extend it. Remove from consideration any eligibles who do not communicate their continued interest in employment within the prescribed period and put them in the inactive inventory for a period of one year.

Upon request, the eligible may have his/her eligibility reinstated during the one-year-period, whether the examination is open or closed. You should consider any communication received from the applicant during his/her eligibility that clearly indicates continued interest in employment as a request to extend eligibility (e.g., letter changing address, congressional inquiry).

Re-examining (recompeting) applicants

As long as the examination is still open, applicants may reapply and be reexamined at any time unless the examination says otherwise. If an applicant competes more than once in a written test, the highest rating is the official one unless a previous eligibility has expired, in which case the latest rating is the official one. If the applicant is limited to a specific number of times he/she can apply for an examination within a limited period of time (such as 6 months or 1 year) disregard the second application submitted by the applicant during the designated period.

When an examination is closed or suspended as to the receipt of new applications, eligibles may to submit information about additional qualifications gained after the closing/suspension date. An eligible may request consideration under different options and/or grade levels at any time if the announcement was open for those options and/or grades anytime during the eligible's period of eligibility and the eligible meets the qualification requirements during the open period.

Your office may set the reexamining and recompetition policy and procedures. This policy, however, should be clearly stated and documented in your standard office procedures manual.

Multiple applications from a single applicant

You may receive multiple applications from a single applicant. If the applications are different, you should review both applications to determine if any changes were made or new information added to one application and not the other. You should combine the applications, then reconcile the rating, if necessary.

Changes to applicant record

You are responsible for annotating the record with any notices of change in name, address, or availability, and for notifying the appointing officer of any significant change in an eligible applicant's status while that person is on a certificate to the official. You should also record any changes in an eligible applicant's qualifications, veterans' preference status, or other information that would affect his/her eligibility or position on a certificate.

Removal based on selection

When an eligible is selected for a career-conditional position, remove him/her from the inventory for those positions in the grade, series, and promotion potential for which he/she was selected. The individual retains eligibility for all other series and grades for which he/she qualifies.

When an eligible is selected for a temporary or term position, he/she remains on the inventory for consideration for permanent positions (see 5 CFR Part 316).

Restoring after removal

You may not restore an eligible who has been removed from an inventory, except when the applicant does not need to retake any written test because the previous test scores are available.

The following applicants are entitled to be restored, upon request, to an inventory or its successor whether the inventory is open or closed to the receipt of new applications:

- A preference eligible who resigned without delinquency or misconduct from a career or career-conditional position provided he/she applies within 90 calendar days after separation; and
- An employee separated (voluntarily or involuntarily) during probation without delinquency or misconduct.

Terminating or Combining Inventories

When to terminate/combine inventories

Before you establish a new inventory covering the same positions (as when a new qualification standard or rating schedule is issued), you should either terminate the old inventory or combine it with an equivalent new inventory. You should terminate:

- Old inventories if one examination has a written test and the other does not, unless OPM authorizes another procedure, and

- An existing inventory when it is no longer needed to fill vacancies, or when a case examining approach is better suited to the agency's needs.

Alternative to termination

Usually you should terminate the old inventory when qualification requirements or rating schedules change.

- You should allow applicants who may not meet the new requirements to submit new application materials.

- If an eligible applicant's score or eligibility changes under the new examination, you should issue a new notice of results.

Maintaining a case file

You should maintain sufficient information in the case file to permit reconstruction of the inventory. The following are examples of information you should include:

- Termination date of the competitor inventory;
- Disposition of the applications on the competitor inventory;
- Date of the last appointment from the inventory; and
- Whether a successor inventory was established.

Retaining applications for extended consideration

If you do not establish a new inventory but you expect to fill future vacancies through case examining, you should retain the applications of persons entitled to extended consideration in a separate file for future vacancies.

Note: This applies to 10-point preference eligibles (see Special Handling of Preference Eligibles in this section) and individuals who lost certification opportunities or failed to receive bona fide consideration (see Chapter 6, Section E, Priority Consideration).

Notification of termination

Whenever you plan to terminate an existing inventory, you should notify all active eligibles in writing if one of the following circumstances occurs:

IF you use…	THEN you should…
A new examination to establish a new inventory	Tell the eligible applicants the open and close dates and the procedures to follow if they wish to apply; or
Case examining	Tell competitors how to find out about future announcements.

Combining inventories

When you combine an existing inventory with a new one, you should follow the procedures cited below:

- Merge current eligibles on the existing inventory with the new inventory in the same order as if the list had resulted from one examination;

- Eligible applicants entitled to priority consideration on the old inventory for reasons such as lost consideration or lost certification retain their preferred standing on the combined inventory; and

- Current eligible applicants on the existing inventory remain on the new inventory for the unexpired period of eligibility.

If an eligible is on both the new and old inventories with different scores, enter him/her on the combined inventory with the higher rating. However, eligibles with preferred standing (e.g., erroneous consideration, CTAP/ICTAP, priority referrals) on the old inventory retain their preferred standing on the combined inventory.

Disposition of records

Schedule applications for disposal according to the records retention and disposition schedule instructions in Appendix C. Attach terminated register cards or equivalent records to your reconstruction sheet for disposition.

Issuing Notices of Results

Introduction

It is a good business practice to keep applicants informed of the status of their application. Thus, upon completing the rating process, you should notify applicants of their eligibility for appointment. In addition to keeping applicants informed, a written notification also serves as the applicant's record in case he/she chooses to challenge or appeal a rating, and may effectively prevent later inquiries.

Information on the notice of results

The information on the notice of results tells applicants whether they are qualified for the position for which they applied. The following information should be included in the notice:

- Title, series, grade of the job, occupational specialty(ies), plus job announcement number or other job identifier;

- Whether the applicant is eligible or ineligible;

- Level of veterans' preference awarded (if eligible);

- Any restrictions on eligibility, such as "subject to meeting education requirements";

- Whether the eligible applicant was referred to the selecting official for employment consideration;

- Brief explanation of the reason that applicant was not qualified -- for example, "did not pass the written test," "did not meet basic experience or education requirements," "did not meet a mandatory selective placement factor," or "salary of the job was below the minimum acceptable level stated in your application" (if eligible); and

- Length of eligibility and the procedures for extending that eligibility (for standing inventories only).

Reconsideration of Rating

Examining decisions made by your office are subject to reconsideration upon reasonable demonstration that a review is necessary. You must establish a written procedure for the processing of an applicant's request for reconsideration of his or her rating(s). The same procedure may be incorporated into the agency administrative grievance system or alternative dispute resolution system and used for agency-employed applicants who grieve an assigned rating (5 CFR Part 300).

You should make your reconsideration procedure available to applicants who wish to challenge an assigned rating.

Contents

Your procedure should incorporate the following elements:

- Any request that might result in a rating change should be made in writing and should indicate why the applicant believes the original decision was not proper;

- The office that made the original decision should conduct the first level of review;

- A staff member other than the person who made the original decision should conduct the review; and

- The response to the request should contain a full explanation of the reasons for the decision, without unduly compromising the rating schedule.

Upon request, the applicant may submit a second level appeal to a designated official within the agency for review. That decision is final. **There is no further appeal to OPM**.

Rating changes

If a reconsideration request leads to a rating change, the applicant's record should reflect the new rating. In case examining, the certificate should reflect the new rating *if you have not yet issued the certificate*. Once a certificate is issued, you should not amend it unless the:

- New rating is "ineligible;"

- Eligible was improperly awarded a higher type of veterans' preference (Example: the applicant was awarded 10-point veterans' preference but after reviewing the final documents, the applicant was not entitles to this 10 points preference); or

- Rating error was the result of the rater/examining office (see Chapter 6).

Section D - References

The following table provides a list of sources pertaining to the topics covered by this section:

Topic	Reference
Merit System Principles	5 U.S.C. § 2301
Competitive service; examinations; when held	5 U.S.C. § 3305
Additional points in examining for preference eligibles	5 U.S.C. § 3309
Competitive service; register of eligibles	5 U.S.C. § 3313
Certification of names for appointment	5 U.S.C. § 3317
Competitive service; selection from certificates	5 U.S.C. § 3318
Employment (General)	5 CFR Part 300
Appeals, grievances and complaints	5 CFR Part 300
Temporary and term appointments	5 CFR Part 316
Period of competition and eligibility	5 CFR Part 332
Recruitment and selection through competitive examination	5 CFR Part 332
Category Rating	5 CFR Part 337
Controlling paperwork burdens on the public	5 CFR Part 1320
Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures	29 CFR Part 1607 www.uniformguidelines.com
OPM delegated examining web page	www.opm.gov/deu
Job Qualifications System for Trades & Labor Occupational Handbook	www.opm.gov/qualifications/x-118c/index.htm
Operating Manual for General Schedule Positions	www.opm.gov/qualifications
Records retention and disposition schedule	Appendix C
Transmutation tables for general schedule positions	Appendix J

Chapter 6 - Certify Eligibles

After you have rated all the applicants, you are ready to certify the best-qualified eligibles for the position. This chapter describes the various criteria used in arranging the eligibles on the Certificate of Eligibles. This chapter contains the following sections:

Section A   Criteria Outlined in the Job Announcement
Section B   Create a Certificate of Eligibles
Section C   Audit a Certificate
Section D   Object to An Eligible
Section E   Priority Consideration
Section F   References

Section A - Criteria Outlined in the Job Announcement

The most important information used in creating a Certificate of Eligibles is generated from the criteria you publicized in the job announcement. The criteria that you identify in the job announcement, such as, series, grade, whether the position is temporary or part-time, and duty location(s), are part of the screening process in identifying who will be on the certificate.

In this section, we will discuss other topics to consider beyond the basic series and grade. This section contains the following topics:

Geographic Area of Consideration
Interdisciplinary Positions
Dual Certification
Positions Restricted to Veterans
Positions Restricted to One Gender

Geographic Area of Consideration

Basic rule

In the competitive examining process, qualified and available applicants should be considered for employment referral regardless of their place of residence. It is clear that in almost all cases, residency is a non-merit factor and violates the merit principles of open competition and job relatedness. As a non-merit factor, residency as an examination requirement is prohibited in 5 CFR Part 300.103(c).

Exception

The only exception to the basic rule is when a residency requirement is established by statute. For these circumstances, you can certify only eligibles who reside within the area of competition defined by the statute. These cases are very rare.

Excessive number of well-qualified applicants

When an excessive number of well-qualified applicants compete for a job, you are permitted to require applicants to choose a reasonable number of locations for which they will be given referral consideration.

Interdisciplinary Positions

Definition

An interdisciplinary position is a position involving duties and responsibilities closely related to more than one **professional** occupation. As a result, you could classify the position into two or more professional occupational series. The nature of the work is such that persons with education and experience in two or more professions may be considered equally well qualified to do the work.

Professional positions by definition are positions which require academic credentials from an accredited college or university. When classifying an interdisciplinary position, the classifier uses **only professional** occupations. It is inappropriate to use any administrative, technical, or clerical position or any combination as an interdisciplinary position. See Appendix K for a list of Professional and Scientific Positions.

Interdisciplinary categories

Interdisciplinary positions generally fall into one of the following two categories:

- Category 1 – Positions which involve a specific combination of competencies/KSA characteristic of two or more professional series. Such positions involve the performance of some duties which are characteristic of one profession and other duties which are characteristic of another profession, and
- Category 2 – Positions which involve competencies/KSAs which are characteristic of either of two or more occupational series. These positions include work which is substantially identical to work performed in either of the professional occupations or academic disciplines involved.

Category 1

The first category of positions involves a specific combination of competencies/KSAs characteristic of two or more occupational series. Such positions involve performing some duties that are characteristic of one series and other duties that are characteristic of another series.

Example of category 1

You have a position overseeing a large site construction project for a nuclear disposal facility. An employee trained in either civil engineering or nuclear engineering could perform the project. Since the work involves some duties from each of the two occupations, the position may be classified in either Civil Engineering Series, GS-810, or Nuclear Engineering Series, GS-840.

Category 2

The second category of positions involves competencies/KSAs with characteristics of either of two or more series or academic disciplines. These positions include work that is substantially identical to work performed in either the professional occupations or academic disciplines involved.

Example of category 2

You have a position to be filled performing research work on flood control issues. An employee trained in either civil engineering or hydrology may accomplish the project. Since both occupations include work that is substantially identical to work performed in either series, the position could be classified in the Civil Engineer Series, GS-810 or Hydrology Series, GS-1315.

Creating the certificate for interdisciplinary positions

You should create and issue **only one** certificate of eligibles for a single interdisciplinary position. When creating an interdisciplinary certificate you should:

1. Evaluate all applicants based on the appropriate qualification standard for the series in which they are applying;

2. Develop the assessment tool(s) (e.g., rating schedule/crediting plan, structured interview, or other type of tool) using the competencies/KSAs identified for the position;

3. Apply the rating schedule to all eligible applicants regardless of series. Eligible applicants are rated and ranked on the same competencies/KSAs; and

4. Issue the Certificate of Eligibles as an interdisciplinary position with all the eligibles ranked in either in score order or quality categories with the series for which each eligible qualified noted next to their names.

Documentation

In both categories, the position description should show clearly that the position is interdisciplinary and indicate the various series in which the position could be classified. The final classification of the position is determined by the qualifications of the person selected to fill it.

Dual Certification

Definition

Dual certification is the concurrent referral of an applicant to more than one position such as, multiple grades, specialties, and/or geographic locations from eligibility established under a particular job announcement or application procedure.

Two alternative methods of certifying eligible candidates

Under the amended regulation (*Federal Register* Vol. 67, No. 32, February 15, 2002), you have the option of using one of the two alternative methods of certifying eligibles for competitive appointments. In most circumstances, you can use these methods when filling multiple jobs at multiple grade levels and/or geographic locations. The two alternative methods are:

1. You may refer an eligible's name out on only one certificate at a time. This method temporarily removes the eligible from further consideration, including any specialties, grade levels, and duty locations, while he or she on the certificate; or

2. You may refer an eligible's name simultaneously on all certificates for which the eligible expresses an interest, is eligible, and is within reach. This is called "dual certification." Under this option, there is no limit to the number of certificates on which a candidate can be referred simultaneously.

Single job vacancy certification at multiple grade levels

OPM's policy on single job vacancy certificates is that you must **dual** certify eligibles to fill a single job vacancy at multiple grade levels or if there is a shortage of well-qualified eligibles.

Example of single job vacancy certification at multiple grade levels

A job announcement is open for one vacancy for an Engineer, GS-801-7/9 grade levels. An applicant submits an application and is qualified for both grade levels. You should dual certify his or her name if the numerical rating is within reach for referral for each grade level. For information on how eligibles are ranked under category rating see Chapter 5, Section B.

Exception to single job vacancy certification at multiple grade levels

There are situations where you may choose not to dual certify. However, the decision not to dual certify should be an exception to the examining procedures, not the normal operation. You should choose single certification only when it is necessary for the efficient operation of your staffing program.

For example, single certification might be appropriate when an agency fills similar positions in multiple locations simultaneously, or uses a standing inventory to fill multiple positions simultaneously or throughout the year.

Under *Federal Register* Vol. 67, No. 32, February 15, 2002, you **must** notify all applicants of your intent to single certify candidates. One way to satisfy this requirement is to include a statement in your job announcement.

Multiple grade levels

When a position is announced at multiple grade levels, you should certify an eligible for all positions from the lowest grade or salary he or she is willing to accept to the highest-grade level for which he or she is qualified.

Example of dual certification for positions at multiple grades

A job announcement is open for two weeks for an Engineering Technician, GS-802-7/8/9/10. An applicant is willing to accept a GS-8 salary and is qualified for the GS-9 grade level. You should refer the applicant on the GS-8 and GS-9 grade level certificates if the ratings are within reach for certification.

Multiple specialties

When a position is announced for multiple specialties, you may certify eligibles to only the specialties for which the eligible is qualified and within reach. The eligible should be notified of his/her ratings for each specialty.

Example of multiple dual certification for positions with multiple specialties

A job announcement is posted for Clerical positions that include Clerks, Typists, Receptionists, and Stenographers. An applicant submits an application for all the specialties. However, the applicant is qualified only for the Clerk and Receptionist jobs because he or she lacks the typing and stenography skills required for the other jobs. In this situation, you may refer the applicant to jobs for which the applicant is qualified (i.e., Clerk and Receptionist).

Multiple geographic locations

When a job announcement is posted for multiple geographic locations, applicants should be allowed to apply for all or given a choice to select a specific number of locations. After determining the applicant is qualified, you should certify the eligible to each geographic location selected by the applicant if his/her numerical rating is within reach for certification for that location.

Example of dual certification for positions at multiple geographic locations

A job announcement is open for three geographic locations, i.e., San Francisco, Miami, and New York City. An applicant submits an application for all three locations and is qualified for the position with a numerical score of 91. You issue three certificates but you refer the applicant only on the certificates for Miami and New York City because the lowest score reached for both locations was 89. For the San Francisco location, the applicant's score was not high enough for referral since the lowest score reached for the location was 99.

Quick Reference

Below is a quick reference guide on how to handle multiple categories.

IF an announcement is announced for multiple…	AND the applicant applies for …	THEN you should refer the applicant for…
Grades	All grades	the lowest grade he/she will accept to the highest grade qualified
Specialties	All specialties	only the specialties for which he/she is qualified.
Geographic locations	All geographic locations	only the geographic location for which his/her score is within reach for certification.

Positions Restricted to Veterans

There are several jobs in the competitive service for which competition is restricted to preference eligibles as long as there are qualified preference eligibles available (5 U.S.C. § 3310).

Types of jobs

The types of jobs restricted to preference eligibles are:

- Custodian;
- Elevator Operator;
- Messenger; and
- Guard.

Definition of Custodian

Custodian is one who:

- Performs cleaning or other ordinary routine maintenance duties in or about a small Government building or a building under Federal control, a park, a monument, or another Federal reservation; or
- Acts as a foreman of laborers engaged in cleaning or janitorial duties in or about a large Government building or a building under Federal control, a park, a monument, or another Federal reservation; or
- Fires a heating plant in a Federal building as a part of his/her duties in connection with the cleaning and ordinary maintenance of the building.

Exception: This term does not include:

- Skilled or semi-skilled trades positions; or
- Laborer or foreman of laborers when the duties are not custodial in nature.

You may wish to use the general rule that the position is restricted only when 50 percent or more of the duties are custodial services.

Definition of Elevator Operator

An individual whose primary duty is the running of freight or passenger elevators. The work includes opening and closing elevator gates and doors, working elevator controls, loading and unloading the elevator, giving information and directions to passengers such as the locations of offices, and reporting problems in running the elevator.

Definition of Messenger

A messenger is one who supervises or performs general messenger work (such as running errands, delivering messages, and answering call bells) or other light and simple manual or mechanical work, and incidentally performs miscellaneous tasks of a simple or routine nature.

Definition of Guard

A Guard is one who is:

- Assigned to a station, beat, or patrol area in a Federal building or a building under Federal control to prevent illegal entry of persons or property or the illegal removal of persons or property; or

- Required to stand watch at or to patrol a Federal reservation, industrial area, or other area designated by Federal authority, in order to protect life and property; make observations for detection of fire, trespass, unauthorized removal of public property or hazards to Federal personnel or property.

How to announce for a position restricted to veterans

For positions restricted to preference eligibles, your job announcement should contain a statement identifying the position as restricted to preference eligibles and explaining whether applications will be accepted from non-preference applicants. If you accept applications from non-preference eligibles, you should state in the announcement that they will not be considered if preference eligibles are available.

How to examine for a restricted position

Our past experience shows that a normal public notice generates an ample supply of qualified preference eligibles for referral. Filling a restricted position is no different than filling a non-restricted position except that only preference eligibles are referred. After you determine the qualifications of the applicants, you must refer only the preference eligibles. However, in the absence of any qualified preference eligible, you may refer non-preference eligibles for employment consideration (5 U.S.C. § 3310).

Positions Restricted to One Gender

5 CFR Part 332 generally prohibits an appointing officer from restricting employment consideration to candidates of one gender. However, OPM may authorize exceptions to this prohibition in unusual circumstances.

How to request an exception

To obtain an exception to the general prohibition against gender-based restrictions, you must:

- Before the job is announced, contact OPM's Human Capital Leadership and Merit System Accountability Division at:

  U.S. Office of Personnel Management
  Human Capital Leadership and Merit System Accountability Division
  1900 E Street, NW., Room 7470
  Washington, DC 20415

- Submit a written explanation as to why you believe such a restriction is warranted.

Section B - Creating a Certificate of Eligibles

You screened all the applicants based on what you publicized in the job announcement. Now you are ready to create the Certificate of Eligibles. This section contains information on how to:

- Place the eligibles in order of their entitlement;
- Apply tie breaking procedures;
- Identify the number of names for a full certificate; and
- Determine time limits on a certificate.

This section contains the following topics:

Ranking the Eligibles
Tied Ratings
Number of Names Certified
Create a Certificate of Eligibles

Ranking the Eligibles

After completing the rating process, you are now ready to rank order each eligible in score order and in the order of his or her entitlement; then refer the names to the Human Resource Office and the selecting official. By ranking each eligible, you are establishing what we call the "order of selection." For all eligibles listed on the Certificate of Eligibles, you must follow the order of certification set forth in 5 U.S.C. § 3313 and 5 CFR Part 330.

For case examining and competitor inventories, the order of eligibles will vary depending upon the nature of the position being filled. This section discusses the rule that applies generally as well as how to order eligibles applying for professional and scientific positions at GS-9 and above and positions restricted to preference eligibles. Lastly, this section outlines whether you are obligated to rate and rank eligibles if there are three or fewer of them.

General Rule

You must use these categories to order a Certificate of Eligibles for most jobs and grade levels. The eligibles are ranked in the following order:

Order	Entitlement
1 (5 CFR Part 330)	Interagency Career Transition Assistance Program (ICTAP) Eligibles,
2 (5 U.S.C. § 2301)	Eligibles who lost consideration due to erroneous certification
3 (5 U.S.C. § 3313)	All 10-point preference eligibles who have a service-connected disability of 10 percent or more (CPS and CP)
4 (5 U.S.C. § 3313)	All remaining eligibles in score order

Order by entitlement

Within each entitlement group, eligibles may be ranked in the order of their numerical rating, including veterans' preference points, or in alphabetical order. Once an eligible is identified, the selecting official must select the eligible over any other eligible for the vacancy in the local commuting area. (5 CFR Part 330)

Ordering the preference categories

If there is a tie in numerical scores between eligibles in different preference categories, the order of ranking is CPS/CP, XP, TP and then NV. For example, an eligible with a rating of 98XP is listed ahead of an eligible with 98TP. Similarly, an eligible with a rating of 98TP is listed ahead of a non-preference eligible who scored a 98.

Ordering the compensable preference eligible

Compensably disabled preference eligibles (CPS and CP) go to the top of the Certificate of Eligibles, regardless of numerical rating, ahead of all other eligibles, except ICTAP and Priority Consideration eligibles. If there is more than one CPS or CP eligible, they are listed in score order. For this purpose there is no difference between CPS and CP veterans. If tied scores occur, you should apply a tie-breaking procedure. (See Tied Ratings)

Professional and scientific positions at GS-09 and above

For **Professional and Scientific Positions at the GS-9 grade level and above**, the eligibles are ranked in the following order:

Order	Entitlement
1 (5 CFR Part 330)	ICTAP eligibles
2 (5 U.S.C. § 2301)	Eligibles who lost consideration due to erroneous certification
3 (5 U.S.C. § 3313)	All other eligibles in score order

Order by entitlement

Within each entitlement group, eligibles may be ranked in the order of their numerical rating, including veterans' preference points, or in alphabetical order. Once an eligible is identified, the selecting official must select the eligible over any other eligible for the vacancy in the local commuting area. (5 CFR Part 330)

Special note

Within each of the above groups, eligibles are ranked in the order of their numerical ratings, including veterans' preference points. For professional or scientific positions at grades GS-9 and above, compensably disabled preference eligibles (CPS/CP) **are not** automatically placed at the top of the Certificate of Eligibles. (5 U.S.C. § 3313) For a list of professional and scientific positions see Appendix K, Professional and Scientific Positions.

Where to find more information on this topic

Professional and scientific positions are identified in the OPM publication *Handbook of Occupational Groups and Families*. The Handbook is essentially a compilation of "series definitions" taken from OPM's classification standards. Therefore, in the absence of the Handbook, you may also refer to the appropriate classification standard. It is very important to verify whether the series is in a professional occupation, since a misidentification could lead to a violation of veterans' preference law and the invalidation of an appointment. An interim list of professional and scientific positions can be found in Appendix K, Professional and Scientific Positions.

Restricted to preference eligibles

There are several types of jobs which restrict appointments to preference eligibles as long as there are qualified preference eligibles available (5 USC § 3310). For positions restricted to preference eligibles, the eligibles are ranked in the following order:

Order	Entitlement
1 (5 CFR Part 330)	ICTAP eligibles entitled to veterans' preference
2 (5 U.S.C. § 2301)	Preference eligibles who lost consideration due to erroneous certification
3 (5 U.S.C. § 3313)	All 10-point preference eligibles with a service-connected disability of 10 percent or more
4 (5 U.S.C. § 3313)	All remaining preference eligibles
5 (5 CFR Pat 330)	Non-preference ICTAP eligibles
6 (5 U.S.C. § 2301)	Non-preference eligibles who lost consideration due to erroneous certification
7 (5 U.S.C. § 3313)	All remaining eligibles (if non-veterans were allowed to compete)

When to certify non-preference eligibles

You may certify non-preference eligibles only if there is a likelihood that the supply of preference eligibles will be exhausted before all vacancies have been filled. When non-veterans are certified, they are listed below the last preference eligible.

Special note

When eligibles within a particular group have identical ratings, the tied ratings are broken by listing preference eligibles first in the order of their preference (e.g., CPS/CP, XP, and TP), then non-preference eligibles. If tied scores occur, you should apply a tie-breaking procedure. (See Tied Ratings)

Unrated eligibles

When there are three or fewer eligibles and they are either all veterans or all non-veterans, you do not need to rate and rank the eligibles. You may simply list the eligibles randomly on the certificate with a notation "Eligible" in lieu of a rating. However, if there are more than three eligibles, or if the group is a mix of with veterans and non-veterans, you must assign a numerical score and place the eligibles on the certificate in score order.

Tied Ratings

There may be instances where tied ratings occur among eligibles in the same preference category (e.g., CPS and CP). When this happens, you need to use a method to break the sub-group ties on a consistent basis.

Four methods of breaking tied rating

Here are four methods for breaking tied ratings. You may use any or all of the different types of tie breaking methods. These methods may be applied in any sequential order.

These four methods of breaking ties are examples, and are not intended to serve as an exhaustive list. You may adopt other methods of randomly breaking ties. However, care should be taken to assure that the method is truly random. Listing eligibles alphabetically, for example, is not acceptable. Whatever procedure is adopted, it must be recorded if used to break sub-group ties, and kept with the certificate documentation records.

Type of Tie Breaker	Description of Method
Job-related Factor	You may use a job-related factor to break tied scores provided that, you did not use these factors in the ranking process.
Name Request	If the selecting official submits a name request within the tied range, you may place the name request ahead of other eligibles with the same rating within the sub-group.
Name Request Based on Job-related Factor	A name request may also be identified after a certificate of eligibles is issued to the selecting official. If you issue a certificate with tied scores and the selecting official determines that he or she would like to identify an eligible as a name request from among the tied scores, then you would apply the name request tied score procedures to the certificate when it is returned. The identification of the eligible should be based on a job related factor.
Random Number	You may break ties randomly. We recommend using the last digit of eligibles' Social Security Numbers in conjunction with a table of random numbers. Those procedures are explained in Appendix L, Random Referral Instructions.

Number of Names Certified

After arranging all the eligibles in score order by their entitlement, it is time to consider the number of names that will be referred to the selecting official. Each eligible is entitled to three "bona fide" considerations, and the appointing official is entitled to consider three eligibles for each vacancy.

If you have fewer than three eligible names per vacancy to be referred, you should review your public notice and recruitment efforts to determine if they were adequate. You may receive a request from the selecting official for additional names.

General rule

The general rule for referring the appropriate number of names per vacancy is that you must certify enough names from the highest ranking eligibles to permit the selecting official to consider at least three names for appointment to each vacancy in the competitive service. (5 U.S.C. § 3317)

Fewer than three eligibles

You may not always have three eligible names to refer to the selecting official. If there are less than three eligibles for a particular position, you may refer the names to the selecting official or readvertise the position to attract additional candidates for consideration.

Additional names

At your discretion and based on your past experience, additional names may be certified to compensate for eligibles who are within reach for consideration but will decline or fail to respond to an inquiry of availability or interview.

Certification of eligibles under case examining

By definition, case examining procedures involve a one-time-only action with no expectation of filling other jobs at a later date. Therefore, you may refer all the qualified eligible names to the selecting official in rank order.

Create A Certificate of Eligibles

Once you rank the eligibles in score order within their entitlement, you are ready to prepare the Certificate of Eligibles. This list contains the best qualified eligibles as a result of your public notice and recruitment efforts. It is the list from which the selecting official will make a selection.

When creating a certificate of eligibles, whether it be for case examining or a competitor inventory, you need to consider the type of appointment (career-conditional, temporary or term), grade level, any specialty or travel that is required, and any other conditions of employment that makes your job unique. These are the same factors that you used in the job announcement to attract applicants to apply for the position.

Required items on a Certificate of Eligibles

The information on the Certificate of Eligibles or an equivalent form identifying what job you are referring qualified eligibles:

Information for a Certificate of Eligibles

- Certificate number:
- Title of the job:
- Series of the position:
- Grade of the position:
- Duty location:
- Eligibles' names:
- Rating of each eligible certified, including their veterans' preference points:
- Appropriate veterans' preference symbol of each eligible: CPS, CP, XP, TP or NV (Use of the NV code is optional):
- Signature of the issuing officer:
- Issue date:
- Return/due date (This date will help you to decide the course of action if the certificate is returned late):

Numbering system for certificates

You should establish a system to help track your certificates. The tracking system assists in identifying the status of the case and in the reconstruction process, if necessary.

You may find it useful to assign a certificate number when initiating an SF 39, *Request for Referral of Eligibles* or other initiating document to track the certificate throughout the examining process (see OPM's website for a copy of this form, www.opm.gov).

Eligible's name on a certificate

We also recommend that each eligible's address and phone number(s) (home and work) be included with his/her name on the certificate. This is necessary whenever the application or résumé is not sent with the certificate, (e.g., when the eligible is referred for a temporary position or referred for multiple jobs with the same agency or multiple agencies).

Documenting a returned certificate

Once the selecting official returns the certificate, you should ensure that the case file is documented to reflect the action taken on each of the eligibles that were certified for selection. Typically this documentation is included on the certificate itself. The reverse side of the SF 39, *Request for Referral of Eligibles*, contains symbols that OPM has historically used to report actions on eligibles. You may continue to use these symbols.

When the Certificate of Eligibles is returned, it should be signed and dated by the selecting official as documentation for the file. An electronic signature is acceptable.

Section C - Audit a Certificate

Auditing is the process of certifying the action taken on a returned certificate of eligibles by the selecting official to comply with legal and regulatory selection procedures.

You have three basic responsibilities in the audit process:

1. Determine that all documentation required for declination and other removals from consideration is in order;
2. Determine that all selections were made according to the "rule of three," category rating, and veterans' preference procedures; and
3. Determine that all applications, except those from selected eligibles, are returned.

It is important that certificates are audited before a selectee's first day of work because:

1. If the certificate was worked improperly, any hiring commitments made by the appointing official may potentially be invalid. A prompt audit will catch these errors early; and

2. If the certificate is issued from a competitor inventory where multiple referrals are made, auditing the certificate closes it out and enables eligibles that were not selected to be restored to the active inventory for further employment consideration.

This section contains the following topics:

Preparing the Certificate for the Audit
Auditing a Certificate of Eligibles Under the Traditional "Rule of Three" Procedures
Auditing a Certificate of Eligibles Under Category Rating Procedures
Documenting the Personnel Action

Preparing the Certificate for the Audit

In the process of making selections from a certificate, situations occur that may warrant an eligible to be eliminated from consideration. Any eligible who declines or who fails to respond to inquiries as to his/her availability may be removed from further consideration. The official who received the declination should document these actions adequately. When all actions have been completed on a certificate, the Human Resource Office or selecting official should return it to you promptly.

Documenting the selecting official's action

Once you receive the completed Certificate of Eligibles, you are responsible for assuring that all actions taken on each of the eligibles certified is documented. Appropriate documentation should be included for all eligibles who were removed from consideration (e.g., for failure to respond). The applications of all eligibles, except the eligibles who were appointed, should accompany the certificate.

Reporting codes

Proper reporting codes for all actions can be found on the reverse side of the SF 39, *Request for Referral of Eligibles*. You can locate a copy of this form on our website at www.opm.gov.

Eligible selected (A)

If an eligible is reported **A** for Selected, you should annotate the certificate for documentation for reconstruction purposes.

Documenting declinations (DD)

The preferred documentation for a declination is a written statement from the eligible. If the declination was taken verbally, the official who received the declination should prepare a written summary of the eligible's decision. Verbal declinations must come from the eligible, not from another individual.

Documenting failure to respond (FR)

You may choose how to contact an eligible (by letter, electronic mail, or telephone) to determine his or her availability. All contacts should instruct eligibles to respond by a specific date if they wish to continue to be considered for the position. If you do not hear from the eligible by that date, you should document failure to respond "**FR**" for that eligible and no longer consider that eligible for the position. No additional written documentation or notification is required.

If you are contacting the eligible via telephone, you should make a good faith effort to speak to the eligible before annotating his/her record as FR. You should document the record by showing who made the contact, when, with whom you talked, and a summary of any conversation that you had.

The procedures used to contact eligibles should be specified as a matter of agency policy and applied uniformly and consistently.

Documenting failure to report for an interview

If an eligible fails to appear for a pre-employment interview, he/she may be treated as an **FR** (eliminated from consideration) when:

1. You sent a written notice to the eligible that he/she would be removed from further consideration for the position if he/she failed to appear for an interview; and

2. The arrangements for the interview were reasonable.

In considering such FR actions, you should take into account such matters as the relative importance of the interview to the vacancy, the amount of travel required for the applicant to appear for the interview, and the amount of notice given. Traveling for an interview should normally not be required outside of the commuting area, unless the job is above the clerical level (or above the journeyman level in the skilled trades).

Documenting mail returned unclaimed (CRU)

When a properly addressed, written availability inquiry is returned by the Postal Service because it was undeliverable, the envelope (preferably unopened) is adequate documentation. You should use "**CRU**" as your code.

Elimination of persons already employed by the agency (CE)

A certified eligible may be eliminated from consideration if he or she is serving under the same conditions as that for which the certificate was issued, including:

- Appointing officer;
- Type of position;
- Higher grade;
- Duty location; and
- Type of appointment.

You may use the symbol "**CE**" for this situation. When this symbol is used, the title of position, grade and duty location should be listed as evidence that all of the above conditions are present including the type of appointment and selecting official, if known.

Non-Selected (NS or NN)

If the selecting official decides not to select an eligible, you should use the code non-selected **NS** or **NN**. The application is then returned to the case file.

Objection or pass over

If an eligible is the subject of an Objection/Pass over and the request was sustained, the certificate should be annotated with the appropriate symbol next to the eligible's name. You should use one of the following symbols that describe the type of Objection/Pass over submitted by the selecting official:

- Removed from Certificate (RM) - Medical (5 CFR Part 339)
- Removed from Certificate (RQ) - Other (5 CFR Part 332)

For more information about the Objection or Pass over process, see Section D of this Chapter.

Improper removal

If an eligible's name was removed improperly from consideration, the selecting official's action code must be changed to "not selected" before auditing begins.

Removal from consideration only for preference eligibles

If any preference eligible was certified and was given three bona fide considerations, the preference eligible's consideration may be discontinued. However, you must notify the preference eligible in advance of the discontinuance of certification. (5 U.S.C. § 3317).

Auditing a Certificate of Eligibles Under the Traditional "Rule of Three" Procedures

By applying the traditional "rule of three" procedures, you are fulfilling one of your responsibilities in the audit process. That is, to determine that all selections are made consistent with the "rule of three" and veterans' preference procedures.

Through the "rule of three" procedures, you ensure that each eligible is afforded his or her right to receive a bona fide employment consideration. This can only occur if a valid selection is made. An eligible who is among the top three eligibles does not receive a "consideration" if no one is selected. Additionally, the "rule of three" allows a selecting official to eliminate an eligible that has been considered for three separate appointments from the same or different certificates for the same position. (5 CFR Part 332)

Procedures in applying the "rule of three"

You should observe the following steps in determining the order of selection:

Step	Action
1	Disregard all eligibles that were legitimately removed from consideration, i.e., declination (**DD**); failure to respond (**FR**); mail returned unclaimed (**CRU**); currently employed by the agency (**CE**); and objections or pass over requests that were sustained (**RM** or **RQ**). Example: The Certificate of Eligibles (Certificate) below was returned with the appointing official's actions on each of the eligibles referred. <table><tr><th>Appointing Official's Action</th><th>Score and Name of Eligible</th></tr><tr><td>A</td><td>95.0 TP Armstrong</td></tr><tr><td>DD</td><td>93.0 Baker</td></tr><tr><td>A</td><td>90.0 Carter</td></tr><tr><td>NS</td><td>89.0 Davis</td></tr><tr><td>FR</td><td>89.0 Evans</td></tr><tr><td>NS</td><td>85.0 Farmer</td></tr><tr><td>A</td><td>82.0 Green</td></tr><tr><td>NS</td><td>82.0 Hamilton</td></tr></table>

Step	Action
2	Determine who the first three available eligibles are by considering only those who were appointed (**A**) and not selected (**NS**). Place a "1" beside the names of the top three eligibles to indicate that group of three from which the first selection can be made. First vacancy: | **Appointing Official's Action**	**Score and Name of Eligible**
1 A	95.0 TP Armstrong
1 A	90.0 Carter
1 NS	89.0 Davis | Note: Baker and Evans were removed from consideration because the appointing official indicated an action code of DD for Baker and FR for Evans.
3	Determine first if the selectee is either a: •Preference eligible; •Non-preference eligible appearing above non-selected, preference eligible(s) on the certificate; or •Non-preference eligible on a certificate where no preference eligible appears. If the selectee meets the above criteria, then the selection is valid. If the selectee does not meet the above criteria, then the selection is invalid.
4	Determine who the next three available eligibles are for consideration. This group of three consists of the names of the remaining two eligibles who were not selected for the first job and the next highest ranking eligible. Place a "2" beside the names to indicate that group of three from which the second selection can be made. Second vacancy: | **Appointing Official's Action**	**Score and Name of Eligible**
2 1 A	90.0 Carter
2 1 NS	89.0 Davis
2 NS	85.0 Farmer |
5	Confirm that the selectee is within the second group of three and whether he or she is a preference eligible or non-preference eligible appearing above non-selected, preference eligibles on the certificate. If the selectee meets these criteria, then the selection is valid. If the selectee does not meet the above criteria, then the selection is invalid. Note: Davis received two bona fide considerations and is entitled to a third. This is important to remember for the next two steps.

Step	Action
6	Determine who the next three available eligibles are for consideration. This group of three consists of the names of the remaining two eligibles who were not selected for the second job and the next highest ranking eligible. Place a "3" beside the names to indicate that group of three from which the third selection can be made. Third vacancy: <table><tr><td>**Appointing Official's Action**</td><td>**Score and Name of Eligible**</td></tr><tr><td>3 2 1 NS</td><td>89.0 Davis</td></tr><tr><td>3 2 NS</td><td>85.0 Farmer</td></tr><tr><td>3 A</td><td>82.0 Green</td></tr></table>
7	Confirm that the selectee is within the third group of three and whether he or she is a preference eligible or non-preference eligible appearing above non-selected, preference eligibles on the certificate. If the selectee meets these criteria, then the selection is valid. If the selectee does not meet the above criteria, then the selection is invalid. In our example, Davis appears to have received three bona fide considerations without being selected. Davis' name can now be removed from consideration if there is a fourth job to be filled. Draw a line through Davis' name to indicate that he received three considerations as shown below. <table><tr><td>**Appointing Official's Action**</td><td>**Score and Name of Eligible**</td></tr><tr><td>**3 2 1 NS 3**</td><td>89.0 Davis</td></tr><tr><td>3 2 NS</td><td>85.0 Farmer</td></tr><tr><td>NSA</td><td>82.0 Hamilton</td></tr></table>
8	Continue following these steps for each additional vacancy.

Example: Applying the "rule of three" with veterans

The following is another example of applying the "rule of three". In this example, the certificate contains different types of veterans.

Step	Action
1	Disregard all eligibles who were legitimately removed from consideration, i.e., declination (**DD**); failure to respond (**FR**); mail returned unclaimed (**CRU**); currently employed by the agency (**CE**); and objections or pass over requests that were sustained (**RM** or **RQ**) Example: Certificate of Eligibles - The certificate below will be used throughout this process. {table}
2	Determine who the top three available eligibles are by considering only those who were appointed (**A**) and not selected (**NS**) or not contacted (**NN**). In our example, Mr. Brown was selected. Although Mr. Brown received fewer veterans' preference points, his selection is valid. Since the top three eligible candidates are veterans, there is no distinction among the preferences. In this group, the veterans are equal and any one veteran can be selected regardless of preference.

Table inside Step 1:

Appointing Official's Action	Score and Name of Eligible
NS	99.0 CP Bill Smith
NN	98.0 CPS Randy Newman
A	92.0 TP John Brown
DD	90.0 XP Candy Noles

Finding an improper audit

When an improper selection is made and discovered through the audit process, you should:

1. Notify the appointing official immediately, and
2. Make the correction before the selectee enters on duty, if possible.

There are several options for correcting an improper appointment depending on the circumstances (see Chapter 6, Section E for Priority Consideration).

Special note

If a name was removed improperly from consideration, the appointing official's action code must be changed to "not selected" before auditing begins.

Auditing a Certificate of Eligibles Under Category Rating Procedures

Selections under category rating procedures

When selecting from a certificate of eligibles under category rating procedures, a selecting official makes a selection from among all of the eligibles in the highest quality category. Remember, a selecting official may not select a non-preference eligible over a preference eligible unless the selecting official follows the procedures set forth in 5 U.S.C. 3318.

Veterans' Preference rule

OPM retains exclusive authority to:

- Make medical qualification determinations pertaining to preference eligibles (you must submit your pass over request with supporting documentation to OPM's Strategic Human Resources Policy Division); and

- Grant or deny an agency's request to pass over a preference eligible with a compensable service-connected disability of 30 percent or more. You must submit to the OPM Human Capital Officer for your agency a completed SF-62, *Agency Request to Pass Over a Preference Eligible or Object to an Eligible* along with supporting documentation explaining the reasons for requesting the pass over (5 U.S.C. § 3318 (b)(2)).

Selection procedures under category rating

You are now ready to audit a certificate under category rating. You may select from within the highest quality category regardless of the number of candidates (i.e., the rule of three does not apply). However, preference eligibles receive absolute preference within each category. If a preference eligible is in the category, you may not select a non-preference eligible unless a request to pass over the preference eligible in accordance with 5 U.S.C. § 3318, is submitted and the request is approved.

If there are fewer than three candidates in the highest quality group, you may combine the highest group with the next lower group and make selections from the merged group. The newly merged category would then constitute the highest quality category. Preference eligibles must be listed ahead of non-preference eligibles in the newly merged category. Once again, as long as a preference eligible remains in the merged category, you may not select a non-preference eligible unless you receive approval to pass over the preference eligible in accordance with 5 U.S.C. § 3318.

You are reminded that preference eligibles are placed in the highest quality category based on the quality category definition developed with the exception of the preference eligible with a compensable service-connected disability of at least 10 percent who must be listed in the highest quality category (except in the case of scientific or professional positions at the GS-9 level or higher). You should review the quality categories to ensure they accurately reflect the best qualified.

The "three consideration" rule embodied in 5 CFR 332.405 does not apply in category rating. The reference to "three considerations" in 5 U.S.C. § 3317(b) is associated with the traditional process for the discontinuance of certification of preference eligibles from a register, and only applies to category rating in that limited context.

Finding an improper audit

When an improper selection is made and discovered through the audit process you should:

1. Notify the appointing official immediately, and
2. Make the correction before the selectee enters on duty, if possible.

There are several options for correcting an improper appointment depending on the circumstances (see Chapter 6, Section E – Priority Consideration).

Documenting the Personnel Action

Instructions for documenting the SF 50, *Notification of Personnel Action*, for persons given career or career-conditional appointments under delegated examining are covered in Chapter 9, Table 9-A of the *Guide to Processing Personnel Actions.*

Authority codes

The following are authority codes for your use as a guide for Human Resource Offices in coding their SF 50's.

IF…	THEN the authority code is…
you examine under delegated examining authority	BWA
OPM examines under a reimbursable agreement	ACM
you make an appointment under the Outstanding Scholar Program	AYM-ABK
you make an appointment under the Bilingual and\or Bicultural Certification	AYM-ABL

Section D - Object to an Eligible

A selecting official may object to any eligible certified. As a delegated examining office, you have the authority to rule on most types of objections. However, the decision must be in accordance with the authority granted in your delegation agreement. Refer to your Interagency Delegated Examining Agreement for specific authorities (see Appendix A).

However, OPM retains exclusive authority to:

- Make medical determinations pertaining to preference eligibles (5 CFR Part 339); and
- Grant or deny an agency's pass over request of a preference eligible with a compensable service connected disability of 30% or more (5 U.S.C. § 3318).

We will guide you through each objection and pass over process in this section.

This section contains the following topics:

> Objecting to an Eligible
> Pass over of a Preference Eligible

Objecting to an Eligible

When selecting from a certificate of eligibles, an appointing official must select from the three highest ranking eligibles available for appointment. (5 CFR Part 332) Additionally, an appointing official may not pass over a preference eligible to select a lower-ranking nonpreference eligible without the requisite approval.

On occasion, an appointing official may wish to make a selection outside the above restrictions when there are adequate and proper reasons, concerning one or more of the highest ranking eligibles. Rather than afford consideration to such an eligible, the appointing official may wish to eliminate an eligible from consideration.

Definition

An **objection** is an agency's request to remove an eligible from consideration on a particular certificate.

Objection based on proper and adequate reasons

An objection may only be sustained if it is based on proper and adequate reasons. The following list details various grounds for objecting to candidates. The list does not cover all bases on which objections may be made, nor are the decisions suggested by this *Handbook* necessarily binding under all circumstances. Each case must be decided on its own merits. Your decision should recognize both the needs of the agency and the basic principles of the merit system.

Type	Description
Affiliations	Any affiliations the applicant may have which could clearly be expected to present a conflict of interest may constitute a valid objection.
Age	Generally, age alone is not a sufficient basis for eliminating an eligible from consideration. The selecting official may, however, request the elimination of individuals who do not meet the minimum age requirements for Federal employment or who exceed the maximum entry age for positions with established maximum age requirements.
Education	When education is not an absolute minimum requirement for the position to be filled, lack of education is not a valid basis for an objection.
Experience	Objections based on lack of experience (minimum qualifying experience, either general or specialized, or selective factors) may be sustained only when that experience is part of the minimum requirements for the position.
Fraud or False Statements	A selecting official may object to an eligible on the basis of material, intentional false statement or deception in fraud on examination or appointment.

Type	Description
Gender	You may restrict consideration to one gender only in unusual circumstances and only upon specific approval of OPM. (5 CFR Part 332) The determination as to whether a position should be restricted in this way should always be made <u>before</u> an announcement is issued.
Habitual Use of Alcohol	A selecting official may object to an eligible on the basis of alcohol abuse of a nature and duration which suggests that the applicant would be prevented from performing the duties of the position or would constitute a direct threat to the property or safety of others.
Illegal Use of Narcotics	A selecting official may object to an eligible on the basis of illegal use of narcotics, drugs, or other controlled substances, without evidence of substantial rehabilitation.
Medical	You may consider an eligible medically disqualified when he/she has a physical or medical (including mental health) condition that will prevent him/her from performing the full range of essential duties and responsibilities of the position safely and efficiently.
Performance Rating	You may base an objection on an unsatisfactory performance rating assigned in some previous period of Federal employment under your agency's guidelines for previous service as they relate to unsatisfactory service.
Personal Characteristics	Personal characteristics are the most difficult requirements to measure and evaluate in the certification process. They are usually identified and assessed during a pre-selection interview or reference check. You may base an objection on the absence of desirable or the presence of undesirable, personal qualities (i.e., mature judgment, tact, objectivity, flexibility, temperament, lack of initiative, unreliability, etc.), if they are essential for satisfactory job performance. In objecting to an eligible on personality traits, the selecting official should: • Identify which elements of a position require the possession of certain personal characteristics, and • Demonstrate, through specific examples, how a particular eligible lacks these desired traits or exhibits undesirable traits.
Previous Service/Employment	A selecting official may object to an eligible on the basis of negligence or misconduct in previous service/employment with the same or another agency/employer.
Religion	A selecting official may object to an eligible whose religion prevents working on a day included in the regular tour of duty.

Type	Description
Security Clearance	If your agency cannot grant a security clearance to an eligible for whatever reason, you should sustain the agency's objection to that applicant. Since the legal responsibility for granting the security clearance is with the agency, it is not necessary for the selecting official to provide you with the reasons why an eligible does not meet its security requirements.

Required action

An eligible that is objected to by an appointing official may be removed from consideration on a certificate **only after the objection has been sustained**. Appropriate action codes are explained on the reverse side of the SF 39, *Request for Referral of Eligibles*. You can locate a copy of this form on our web site www.opm.gov.

Forms used in an objection or pass over

Objections are usually submitted by the Human Resource office on an SF 62, *Agency Request to Pass Over a Preference Eligible or Object to an Eligible* or any equivalent documents. A copy of this form can be found on OPM's website at www.opm.gov/forms.

How to handle an objection to eligible

The following are four steps in the process of objecting to an eligible (5 CFR Part 332):

Step	Who	What Happens
1	Selecting Official	Must submit his or her reasons for objecting to the individual to the examining office that issued the certificate.
2	Examining Office	Reviews the reasons for the objection and makes a decision. | IF the objection is…	THEN the Examining Office
---	---
Sustained	agrees with the selecting official's reasons for removing the eligible from consideration.
Not sustained	disagrees with the selecting official's reasons for removing the eligible from consideration. The eligible's name remains on the Certificate of Eligibles for consideration or selection.	
3	Examining Office	Notifies the selecting official of its decision in writing.
4	Selecting Official	Takes the following action on the objection. | IF the objection is…	THEN the selecting official…
---	---
Sustained	removes the eligible from consideration for the job.
Not sustained	has two options: • challenge the decision by submitting additional information to support a favorable decision, or • consider/select the eligible for a job. .	

Pass Over of a Preference Eligible

Definition

A **pass over request** is an objection filed against a preference eligible that results in the selection of a nonpreference eligible.

Basic rule in passing over a preference eligible

In competitive examining procedures, an appointing officer may not pass over a preference eligible to select a lower-ranking non-preference eligible, unless he or she submits reasons to you that are sufficient to warrant the pass over.

How to handle a pass over of a preference eligible

The procedure for passing over a preference eligible is the same as the process for objecting to an eligible; except for pass overs on 30% or more preference eligibles (see How to Handle a Pass over of a CPS Eligible). A pass over request may be sustained only if such a request is based on a "proper and adequate reason." (5 U.S.C. 3318)

CPS eligible pass over request

OPM retains authority to rule on the proposed pass over of a 30 percent or more compensably disabled veteran (CPS) (5 U.S.C. § 3318 (b)(2)).

Regulatory requirement of a pass over of a CPS

Under 5 U.S.C. § 3318 (b)(2), a CPS preference eligible is entitled to advance notice of a **proposed pass over.** The CPS veteran has the right to respond to the appointing official's reasons for pass over. The veteran must submit a response to OPM within 15 days of the notification.

How to handle a proposed pass over of a CPS eligible

There are three steps in processing a proposed pass over of a compensable disabled preference eligible of 30 percent or more (5 U.S.C. § 3318).

Step	Who	What Happens
1	Selecting Official	Must notify the CPS veteran of a proposed pass over. The notification must include: • Notice of proposed pass over, including the agency, title/series/grade of the job, duty location, and certificate number; • An explanation of the reasons for the proposed pass over; and • Notice of the right to respond to those reasons to OPM within 15 days of the notice. You must include in the notification letter the following mailing or email address where the veteran may submit his or her response: For Qualifications-based actions: U.S. Office of Personnel Management Employee Services 1900 E Street, NW, Room 6500 Washington, DC 20415 or VeteransPassedOverRequests@opm.gov For suitability-based actions: U.S. Office of Personnel Management FPIC-SAB P.O. Box 618 Boyers, PA 16018-0618
2	Selecting Official	Must send a copy of the proposed pass over request with supporting documentation and a copy of the notification sent to the CPS veteran to OPM at the above address.

3	OPM Official	• Must make a decision after considering any response submitted by the veteran within 15 days of the notice; and • Must notify the appointing official and the veteran of its decision in writing.

IF the pass over request is…	THEN the selecting official…
Sustained	Removes the preference eligible from consideration for the job.
Not sustained	Has three options: • Challenge the decision by submitting additional information to support a favorable decision; • Consider/select the preference eligible for a job; or • Does not make a selection.

Pass over requests based on a medical condition

You may consider a preference eligible medically disqualified when he/she has a physical or medical (including mental) condition that will prevent him/her from performing the full range of essential duties and responsibilities of the position safely and efficiently.

In considering whether a physical or medical condition will have an impact on an eligible's capacity to perform the job efficiently and safely, you are required to assess whether reasonable accommodation can be provided to permit performance of the job despite the condition.

How to handle a request for medical pass over

There are four steps in processing a proposed request for medical pass over of a preference eligible (5 CFR Part 339).

Steps	Who	What Happens
1	Selecting Official	Must submit a proposed request with supporting documentation to OPM at: U.S. Office of Personnel Management Employee Services – Hiring Policy (Medical) 1900 E Street, NW, Room 6500, Washington, DC 20415
2	OPM Official	• Reviews the proposed request for a pass over and makes a decision. • Notifies the appointing official of the decision in writing. • Notifies the preference eligible of the decision.
3	Selecting Official	Takes the following action on the pass over decision. <table><tr><th>IF the pass over request is</th><th>THEN the selecting official</th></tr><tr><td>Sustained</td><td>removes the preference eligible from consideration for the job.</td></tr><tr><td>Not sustained</td><td>has two options: • challenge the decision by submitting additional information to support a favorable decision; or • consider/select the preference eligible for a job.</td></tr></table>

Section E - Priority Consideration

Introduction

Priority consideration is a special placement priority that is given to an eligible who was previously denied consideration due to an administrative error or a law or regulatory violation. It is important to remember that there is no situation where an eligible must be selected, except for the special selection priority of a well-qualified eligible in the Interagency Career Transition Assistance Program (ICTAP) (5 CFR Part 330) .

This section explains how and what to do to complete the certification process to include priority consideration. This section contains the following topics:

- Lost Consideration Due to Erroneous Certification
- Lost Employment Consideration
- Lost Certification

Lost Consideration Due to Erroneous Certification

Definition

An erroneous certification is an inadvertent misranking, noncertification, or failure to give bona fide consideration to an eligible in connection with a competitive certificate. The erroneous certification must be the result of an administrative error for the remedies listed in the following section to apply.

Cases of knowing or intentional manipulation of the examining system are handled based on their unique characteristics and will typically be referred to the Office of Special Counsel.

Two types of erroneous certification

Erroneous certification occurs when an eligible does not appear in the correct order on the certificate (i.e., was misranked on a certificate or did not appear on the certificate at all) or when an eligible appeared on the certificate but did not receive appropriate consideration.

There are two principal types of erroneous certification, those that:

1. Involve a violation of law (e.g., "rule of three" or Veterans' Preference Act), and
2. Do not involve a violation of law (e.g., an administrative error).

Correcting an erroneous appointment

In the case of erroneous certification, you always have the option of regularizing the appointment by removing the incumbent, if the selectee enters on duty before the error is discovered. (See below).

Error of the commission principle

This principle was first explained in a 1917 Attorney General's decision (Civil Service - Erroneous Certification, April 19, 1917.31 U.S. Op. Att. Gen. 110, 1917. WL 729 (U.S.A.G.)). In this decision, the Attorney General concluded that regularizing appointments from an erroneous certificate was unduly harsh to the selectee and contrary to the intent of Congress.

The error of the commission is intended to correct administrative errors on the part of the examining office. The examining office must consult with their headquarters in the resolution of the erroneous action.

Notification

If an erroneous certification is discovered and an eligible is affected, you should notify the eligible immediately, particularly if the error was due to a legal violation.

Documentation

In all cases of erroneous certification, the case file should be documented with the facts of the case. Follow-up action should also be taken, (e.g., review of processing procedures and additional staff training) to preclude recurrence of the problem.

Lost Employment Consideration

Introduction

The more serious type of erroneous certification is in case where there is a violation of law (e.g., Title 5 of the United States Code and the Veterans' Preference Act of 1944.) This type of erroneous certification is known as Lost Employment Consideration or Loss of Bona Fide Employment Consideration. When considering your options for correcting any lost employment consideration actions, you should be mindful of any hiring restrictions of other placement assistance programs (e.g., CTAP, ICTAP, RPL), for the geographical areas.

Conditions for a legal violation

In order for there to be a legal violation, **all** four conditions must be met:

1. A selection must be made from the erroneous certificate;
2. When the erroneous certification is corrected, the misranked eligible must move within reach of selection;
3. When the erroneous certification is corrected, the selectee must move out of selection range; and
4. The misranked eligible must meet all the qualification requirements for the job.

Correcting the violation

You should take the following steps to correct an erroneous certification where there has been a legal violation, i.e., all four criteria were met.

Step	Action
1	If you discover the erroneous certification before a selection is made, you should contact the selecting official immediately and inform him or her not to extend any selection offers until the certificate is amended to add or rerank the eligible.
2	If you determine that an eligible lost consideration on a certificate, the selecting official can make a voluntary offer of non-competitively appointing the eligible to one of the following positions: • an **identical** job (same series, same grade, same promotion potential, same tenure, same geographic location or any location the eligible deems acceptable). or • an **equivalent** job (same grade, same promotion potential, and same tenure) for which the eligible qualifies in the same geographic area in which the eligible lost consideration or in any geographic area that the eligible considers acceptable. **Note:** If the eligible accepts or declines one of the appointment offers described above, no further action is necessary.

Mandatory action for lost employment consideration

If either a) the selecting official declines to make any of the voluntary offers listed above or b) the eligible declines a position because it is not in either the same location or in one which he or she indicated was acceptable, then the following steps are mandatory:

1. Eligible must receive priority consideration for the next appropriate position (see chart below) announced under competitive procedures; and
2. Eligible would be listed on a certificate of eligibles as the first eligible candidate for consideration under the "rule of three."

Options for lost employment consideration

The appointing official has the option of offering the eligible either or both of the following. (**Note:** Option 1 applies only for 10-point preference eligibles.)

Option	Description
1	Offer employment to any equivalent job (same grade, same promotion potential and same tenure) within the agency for which the eligible is minimally qualified in any geographic area that the eligible deems acceptable.
2	Offer employment to any equivalent job (same grade, same promotion potential and same tenure) within the agency for which the eligible is **well-qualified** in any geographic area that the eligible deems acceptable.

Determining the number of priority considerations

The following table describes a recommended method of determining the number of priority considerations an eligible should receive under the case examining and competitor inventory environment.

IF…	THEN the…
Case examining	number of priority considerations would equal the number of selections made from the original certificate.
Competitor inventory	eligible would continue to receive priority considerations until appointed or until the eligible has received the number of bona fide employment considerations that he/she would have received had the fault not occurred, whichever comes first.

In cases where it is not possible to determine the exact number of lost employment consideration opportunities, an appropriate number of priority consideration opportunities should be given to the eligible based on:
- Activity of the inventory;
- Length of time consideration was lost, and
- Eligible's qualifications relative to others on the inventory.

Lost Certification

Lost certification is the second type of erroneous certification. This type of erroneous certification does not involve a violation of law (i.e., it does not meet the four criteria of a legal violation).

Definition

Lost certification occurs when an eligible is misranked on or left off a certificate but correcting the error would not give the eligible real employment consideration.

Lost certification example

Examples of lost certification.

Example	Description
1	An eligible was left off a certificate but would not have been within reach for selection even if he/she had received proper treatment.
2	An eligible was misranked on a certificate and is within reach when the error is corrected. The selected also stays within reach after the adjustment is made.

Correcting an erroneous certification

When there has been no legal violation, there is no obligation on the part of the selecting official or the examining office to give the eligible any priority consideration.

Order of selection

In cases of lost employment consideration and lost certification, well-qualified ICTAP eligibles **must** be selected before anyone on the certificate, including the eligible that is receiving priority consideration. (5 CFR Part 330)

Section F - References

The following table provides a list of sources pertaining to the topics covered by this section:

Topic	Reference
Merit System Principles	5 U.S.C. § 2301
Additional points in examining for preference eligibles	5 U.S.C. § 3309
Preference eligibles; examinations; guards, elevator operators, messengers, and custodians	5 U.S.C. § 3310
Order of certification	5 U.S.C. § 3313
Certification of names for appointment	5 U.S.C. § 3317
Competitive service; selection from certificates	5 U.S.C. § 3318
Employment (general), basic requirements	5 CFR Part 300
Temporary and term appointments	5 CFR Part 316
Positions restricted to preference eligibles	5 CFR Part 330 subpart D
Agency Career Transition Assistance Plans (CTAP) for local surplus and displaced employees	5 CFR Part 330 subpart F
Interagency Career Transition Assistance Plan for displaced employees	5 CFR Part 330 subpart G
Recruitment and selection through competitive examination	5 CFR 332
Order of selection from certificates	5 CFR 332
Three considerations for appointment	5 CFR Part 332
Processing medical eligibility determinations on certificate of eligibles	5 CFR Part 339
Error of the Commission	April 19,1917, 31 U.S. Op. Att. Gen. 110, 1917 WL 79 (U.S.A.G.)
OPM's Handbook of Occupational Groups and Series	www.opm.gov
Guide to Processing Personnel Actions	www.opm.gov
OPM delegated examining	www.opm.gov/deu
OPM web page for forms	www.opm.gov/forms
The Classifier's Handbook	www.opm.gov
Sample interagency delegated examining agreement	Appendix A
Professional and scientific positions	Appendix K
Random referral instructions	Appendix L

Chapter 7 - Reporting and Accountability

This chapter describes the reporting and accountability requirements for delegated examining offices. Agencies must submit quarterly workload reports, conduct annual internal audits of their delegated examining operations, and submit to periodic reviews by OPM's Human Capital Leadership and Merit System Accountability Division (HCLMSA). (5 U.S.C. §1104)

This chapter contains the following sections:

Section A - Safeguarding the Examining Process

Introduction

This section outlines the basic requirements for safeguarding examination materials.

Basic security of examination materials

Any examining document that contains information that is not releasable under either the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) or the Privacy Act must be maintained in locked filing cabinets, with access restricted to examining office employees only.

Such documents include:

- Rating schedules/crediting plans;
- Written test materials and answer sheets;
- Structured interview questions;
- Certificates of eligibles;
- Correspondence files; and
- Applications.

You must take care to ensure that restricted materials are secured at night and not left out on desks or workstations.

Test Security and Control Officer (TSCO)

A Test Security and Control Officer (TSCO) is a person who has been trained and certified in test security by OPM. Before you take possession of OPM-developed examination materials, you must identify an individual to serve as a Test Security and Control Officer (TSCO).

Specific duties and responsibilities of TSCOs are contained in Appendix E, Handbook for Agency Test Administrators and Test Control Officers.

Test Administrator (TA)

A Test Administrator (TA) is a person who has been trained and certified in test administration by OPM. Only OPM-certified Test Administrators may administer OPM-developed written tests.

Test security agreement

All Test Security Control Officers and Test Administrators should sign and agree to all of the terms and conditions of a test security agreement (see Appendix E), which details their respective duties and responsibilities.

Securing examining materials

The following describes how examining materials are secured:

How Are Examining Materials Secured?	
OPM-developed examining materials	• OPM controls the security and release of OPM-developed written tests, rating schedules/crediting plans, proficiency skill tests, and scoring keys (see 5 CFR Part 300); and • Only OPM-trained and certified Test Administrators and Test Security and Control Officers may have access to OPM-developed test materials. Applicants, union officials, and managers MAY NOT access these materials.
Written tests	• Lock all written test booklets and test papers in a secure place when not in use. • Only OPM-authorized Test Administrators or Test Control Officers may enter the test room with the competitors (for more detailed information, see Appendix E).
Rating schedules/ crediting plans	• Only trained and authorized individuals may handle rating schedules/crediting plans. • You may not loan, give, sell, or otherwise make rating schedules/crediting plans, or answer keys available to any unauthorized individuals, including other components within your agency, without OPM's written permission; nor may you knowingly permit others to make such materials available to unauthorized individuals. • If you are using USA Staffing, you must never leave a computer unattended for an undue length of time (e.g., breaks, lunch, and meetings). You must exit the system during these periods to prevent unauthorized individuals from gaining access to examining materials.

When an examining office employee, or a close relative, intends to compete

Employees who are involved in delegated examining activities, including subject matter experts (SMEs), should notify their supervisor in writing if they:

- Intend to apply for a position that is being handled by the delegated examining office in which they work, or
- Know that a relative or a member of their household intends to apply for such a position.

When an employee, an employee's relative, or a member of an employee's household applies for a position that is being handled by the employee's office, the employee may not be involved in examining and certifying applicants for that position. You should establish a procedure for monitoring or segregating such employees during the examining and certification process.

When an OPM test is legally challenged

If any OPM test material(s) become involved in a legal proceeding conducted by a court of law or others vested with legal authority, you must notify your local OPM Services Branch. The Services Branch will in turn notify OPM's Office of General Counsel (OGC), who will request that the test materials be covered by a protective order to safeguard their confidentiality.

Section B - Freedom of Information (FOIA) and Privacy Acts

An applicant has the right under the Freedom of Information (FOIA) and Privacy Acts (PA) to request certain materials for review or photocopying. This section will discuss which materials can be made available for advisory purposes only. Ultimately, your agency is responsible for deciding whether examining information must be released.

You can find specific provisions pertaining to the release of public information under the Freedom of Information and Privacy Acts in 5 CFR Parts 294 and 297. Additional information and the latest guidance are located on the Department of Justice's (DOJ) web site at http://www.usdoj.gov/04foia/04_7.html.

General policy

You must comply with the FOIA and any guidance issued by DOJ. Any discretionary decision made by you or your agency to disclose information protected under the FOIA should be made only after full and deliberate consideration of the institutional, commercial, and personal privacy interests that could be implicated by disclosing the information.

Privacy Act requests - Material to be made available by authority of the Privacy Act

The following materials may be made available for review or photocopying by applicants who are the subject of the materials, or to their designated representative, when requested under the Privacy Act:

- Application materials submitted by the requesting individual. Notations made by raters or reviewers showing earned rating, veterans' preference, and final rating may remain, as well as notations on experience blocks showing qualifying experience or quality level;
- Inventory (register) cards or other documentation;
- Certification history – identification of dates, jobs, and agencies for which the eligible's name was certified;
- Certificates of eligibles, provided that the names, addresses, social security numbers, phone numbers and any other personal information pertaining to all other eligibles is marked out. **NOTE:** The names of *appointed* individuals - but not other personal information about them - are matters of public record, and therefore may remain unmasked on the certificate. However, care should be taken to determine that the individual shown as selected actually entered on duty;
- Availability inquiry responses and position descriptions in the certification file; and
- Reasons, submitted by the appointing authority, in support of a proposed pass over of a preference eligible must be furnished to the preference eligible, or his or her representative, upon request (see 5 U.S.C. § 3318(b)).

The above information may be made available to a third party only with written authorization from the person who is the subject of the information requested.

Exempt material not to be made available

The following materials should not be disclosed to members of the public, including the applicant concerned:

- Answer keys,
- Rating schedules/crediting plans,
- Rating sheets,
- Test booklets or items, and
- Transmutation tables.

Exempt material: confidential disclosure on a need-to-know basis

Equal employment opportunity (EEO) counselors, investigators and other individuals often request to see confidential information, while observing agency rules and procedures, for such things as applications and rating schedules/crediting plans. Use your discretion in deciding what information to disclose and under what conditions.

EEO officials are usually allowed to review all documentation, but the examining office can, if it wishes, control that review. For example, you can arrange for the review to take place in the presence of a delegated examining office representative and prohibit photocopying of documents.

FOIA requests

We encourage you to share information that is releasable under the Privacy Act even when the request is mistakenly made under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). However, any release of information should state that the records are being released under authority of the Privacy Act, rather than the FOIA.

Denial of Disclosure: If you refuse to disclose information that is requested under the FOIA, you must cite the appropriate exemption(s) in the Act, and tell the requester of his or her right to appeal your decision and to whom such an appeal can be made.

Most denials of disclosure will be based on the following exemptions:

- 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(2), internal personnel rules and practice;
- 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(5), interagency or intra-agency memorandums or letters; and/or
- 5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(6), personnel and medical files the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of a third person's privacy.

In the interest of public relations, you should explain the reason(s) for denial whenever possible. Refer questions regarding issues not covered above to your legal counsel for decision.

Disposition of records

You should determine where you will maintain examining records (e.g., certification files and applications), and notify OPM of this location.
Examining records must be:

- Retained during a specific period of time as explained in Appendix C, Records Retention and Disposition Schedule, and
- Available for OPM's review(s) during the period that the specific document(s) must be retained.

Section C - Quarterly Workload Reports

Introduction

OPM developed a web based information and tracking system to collect each delegated examining office's quarterly workload reports called Delegated Examining Information System (DEIS) at https://deis.opm.gov. You must enter your quarterly workload reports into DEIS. To access this system, you will need a user name and password. If you do not have a user name or password for DEIS, please contact the Center for Merit System Accountability at 202-606-1453 or 202-606-2538.

These reports are due by the 15th of the month following the end of the reporting quarter (i.e., January 15, April 15, July 15, and October 15). You must submit a quarterly workload report even if your office did not conduct any delegated examining activities during the quarter. (5 U.S.C. § 1104)

What to include in your quarterly workload report

You must include the following information in your quarterly workload report:

- Number of applications processed;
- Number of selections made;
- Number of preference eligibles selected;
- Number of certificates audited;
- Number of audited certificates that had preference eligibles at the top;
- Number of audited certificates that did not have preference eligibles at the top;
- Number of audited certificates that were used;
- Number of audited certificates that were unused;
- Number of certificates that were unused due to CTAP/ICTAP referral;
- Certification that the annual self-review has been completed; and
- Other certification as required by your delegation agreement.

What not to include in the quarterly workload report

You should **not** include the following information in your quarterly workload report:

- Applications received or hires made under the Outstanding Scholar hiring authority;
- Applications received or selections made under a noncompetitive authority; or
- Work produced by OPM or another Federal agency under a reimbursable contract.

Instructions for completing the workload form

See Appendix M, Instructions for Completing the Delegated Examining Quarterly Workload Report Form.

Section D - Annual Self-Audits

Introduction

You must conduct annual "self-audits" of your delegated examining operations as prescribed by your Interagency Agreement for Delegated Examining Authority (see Appendix A, Sample Interagency Delegated Examining Agreement).

Who performs the self-review?

You should use agency staff not involved in the delegated examining activities of the office being audited, to conduct the annual self-audit. These self-audits may only be conducted by persons who have received delegated examining training (see Appendix H for an example of what to review in conducting a self-audit).

Exception from self-reviews

When OPM's Human Capital Leadership and Merit System Accountability Division (HCLMSA), Merit Systems Compliance Group conduct a review of your delegated examining operation, that review may substitute for your annual self-audit (see Section E of this Chapter).

Certification of self-review

You must certify annually that the required self-audit has been completed. Submit the certification to your local OPM Services Branch as specified on the attached Delegated Examining Quarterly Workload Report Form (see 5 U.S.C. § 1104 and Appendix M).

Section E - OPM Review

OPM's HCLMSA's Center for Merit Systems Accountability conducts periodic reviews of delegated examining offices to ensure that they are operating in accordance with the merit system and applicable laws, regulations, and policies.

How to prepare for HCLMSA review

Appendix N, Oversight Review Guide, provides questions on four major categories to help you prepare for OPM's review:

- Organization and Jurisdiction;
- Recruitment;
- Application Processing; and
- Certification/Selection.

Special Note

The HCLMSA review of your delegated examining office functions satisfies your annual self-audit requirement.

Section F - References

The following table provides a list of sources for the topics covered by this section:

Topic	Reference
Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)	5 U.S.C. § 552; 5 CFR Part 294
Privacy Act	5 U.S.C. § 552a; 5 CFR Part 297
Delegation of authority for personnel management	5 U.S.C. §1104
Merit System Principles	5 U.S.C. § 2301
Competitive service; selection from certificates	5 U.S.C. § 3110; 5 CFR Part 310
Competitive service; selection from certificates	5 U.S.C. § 3318(b)
Employment (General)	5 CFR Part 300
OPM delegated examining web page	www.opm.gov/deu
OPM Delegated Examining Information System	https://deis.opm.gov
List of OPM's Services Branches	http://www.opm.gov/employ/html/servcntr.asp
Sample interagency delegated examining agreement	Appendix A
Records retention and disposition schedule	Appendix C
Handbook for Agency Test Administrator and Test Control Officer	Appendix E
Test security agreement	Appendix E
Model agency-based accountability agenda	Appendix H
Instructions for completing the delegated examining quarterly workload report form	Appendix M
Oversight review guide	Appendix N

Glossary

Term	Definition
Ability	A competence to perform an observable behavior or a behavior that results in an observable product.
Administrative Law Judge (ALJ)	An independent, impartial trier of fact in formal administrative hearings. An ALJ is similar to that of a trial judge conducting civil trials without a jury. In general, ALJs prepare for and preside at formal hearings required by statute, to be held under or in substantial accord with provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act, in sections 553-559 of title 5, United States Code.
Agency Certification Program	A certification developed by an agency, group of agencies, or other group that demonstrates a person's proficiency in the job-related competencies/KSAs. An agency certification program does not have to be recognized by a professional community.
Applicant	A person who applies for a vacant position.
Appointee	The person who is ultimately appointed to a position, and who enters on board with the hiring agency.
Appointing Officer	A person having the authority, by law, or by duly delegated authority, to appoint, employ, or promote individuals to positions in an agency.
Appointing Authority	The legal or regulatory basis on which a specific appointment may be made to a Federal civilian position.
Assessment Center	A method of evaluating a candidate's job-related competencies/KSAs using multiple raters and exercises to evaluate each competency. Assessment centers utilize a variety of competency-related assessment simulations, including group exercises, in-basket exercises, questionnaires, fact-finding exercises, interviews, and role-playing.
Assessment Tool	A device or method used to measure the degree to which an applicant possesses the competencies or KSAs necessary for successful job performance. Examples of assessment tools include rating schedules, written tests, work samples, and structured interviews.
Augmentation	A procedure by which additional points are added to the ratings of eligibles based upon an assessment of competencies/KSAs pertaining to specific job-related criteria that were not previously measured.
Auditing	The process by which the certifying action is taken on a returned Certificate of Eligibles by the Human Resource Office to comply with legal and regulatory selection procedures.
Behavioral Consistency Method	A method of evaluating a person's training and experience by asking candidates to describe their major achievements in several job-related areas identified for the position, called job dimensions (i.e., competencies/KSAs). The behavioral consistency method operates on the assumption that past behavior is the best predictor of future performance.

Term	Definition
Bilingual/Bicultural Certification	A special hiring program established under the *Luevano* Consent Decree to hire eligible applicants who meet the program's criteria into positions for which a proficiency in the Spanish language or knowledge of the Hispanic culture is beneficial.
Bona-Fide Consideration	An applicant receives bona fide consideration when his or her name is within the group of three eligible candidates referred to the selecting official on a certificate list and a legal appointment is made from the certificate. Each eligible candidate is entitled to three bona fide considerations for the same appointment before he or she can be eliminated from consideration.
Candidates	An applicant who meets the minimum qualifications requirements for a position, and is therefore eligible for consideration. See also "eligible."
Career-Conditional Appointment	Appointment to a non-temporary position in the competitive service pursuant to 5 CFR Part 315.
Career-Transition Assistance Program (CTAP)	A program designed by an agency to actively assist its surplus and displaced employees by providing selection priority for competitive service vacancies. Under the career transition assistance plan (CTAP), you must notify employees who are surplus or have been displaced from your agency of vacancies that your agency plans to fill in their local commuting area. (See Chapter 4 and 5 CFR Part 330).
Case Examining	A technique in which the job seeker applies directly for a specific job and is rated and ranked using job-related competencies/KSAs. A certified delegated examiner conducts the examination process and issues a certificate of eligibles for the position, but does not maintain a standing inventory of qualified applicants.
Category Rating	A process of evaluating qualified eligibles by quality categories rather than by assigning individual numeric scores. The agency assesses candidates against job-related criteria and then places them into two or more quality categories. Synonymous with alternative rating as described at 5 U.S.C. § 3319.
Certificate of Eligibles	A list of the highest-ranked eligibles in score and veterans preference order, submitted to a selecting official for appointment consideration in accordance with the competitive selection laws and regulations.
Closing Date	The date beyond which applications for an advertised position will no longer be accepted. A closing date should be established for each vacancy and must be provided in the job announcement advertising the position.
Competency	A measurable pattern of knowledge, skills, abilities, behaviors, and other characteristics that an individual needs to perform work roles or occupational functions successfully.
Competency-Based Job Profile	A statement of the general and technical competencies required for optimal performance in an occupation or job family. Competencies identified as critical for a job provide a basis for developing applicant assessments and related products.

Term	Definition
Competitive Appointment	An appointment based on selection from a competitive examination or under other specific authority.
Competitive Examining	The competitive examination, which is open to all applicants, may consist of a written test, an evaluation of an applicant's education and experience, and/or an evaluation of other attributes necessary for successful performance in the position to be filled. The process used to fill civil service positions with candidates who apply from outside the Federal workforce. It is also used to enable current Federal employees without civil service status to compete for a permanent appointment and to enable employees with civil service status to compete for other Federal positions.
Competitive Status	A person's basic eligibility for assignment (for example, by transfer, promotion, reassignment, demotion, or reinstatement) to a position in the competitive service without having to compete with members of the general public in an open competitive examination. Once acquired, status belongs to the individual, not to the position. (5 U.S.C. § 3304(a))
Competitor Inventory	A competitor inventory is a rank-ordered list of eligibles that meet one set of qualification requirements, have passed one examining vehicle and are available to be considered for: one or more grade levels; one or more occupational specialties; at one or more geographical locations; and various employment conditions identified on the job announcement such as, travel, night or shift work. A competitor inventory is an alternative to case examining.
Content Validity	A characteristic possessed by an assessment instrument whose contents accurately reflect actual job requirements. For example, a typing test would likely be a highly content-valid instrument for assessing a person's qualifications to be a clerk-typist. Also referred to as "face validity."
Crediting Plan	A method by which a candidate's job-related competencies/KSAs are evaluated by reviewing the factual background of a candidate, to include positions held, levels of responsibility, accomplishments, and job-related education they have received. Also called a "rating schedule."
Critical Hiring Need	A need to fill a particular position or group of positions to meet agency mission requirements brought about by an emergency or potential threat; to meet unanticipated or unusual mission requirement; to conform to the requirements of law, a Presidential directive or Administration initiative; or to address an unexpected event outside of an agency's control.

Term	Definition
Custodian	One who performs cleaning or other ordinary routine maintenance duties in or about a small government building or a building under Federal control, park, monument, or other Federal reservation; or acts as a foreman of laborers engaged in cleaning or janitorial duties in a large government building under Federal control; or fires a heating plant in a Federal building as a part of his/her duties in connection with the cleaning and ordinary maintenance of the building.
Cut-off Date	The date after which applications will continue to be accepted, but will not be given initial consideration. A cut-off date may be useful where large numbers of applications are expected over an extended period of time, and there is an immediate need to fill a position. If a cut-off date is established, it must be provided in the job announcement advertising the position. (See Chapter 3)
Deferred-Rated Competitor Inventory	A list of applicants in alphabetical or identification number order. The list also includes options and grades for which the applicants are considered. Although there may be an initial screening for basic qualifications, applications are rated only when a certificate is requested for a specific job announcement. Typically, the rating is valid only for that specific position.
Delegation Agreement	An agreement between the U.S. Office of Personnel Management and the head of a department or agency that delegates examining authority to the agency, as provided by Title 5 U.S.C. § 1104 and amended by Public Law 104-52, dated November 1995. (See Appendix A)
Delegated Examining Authority	Authority to fill competitive civil service positions pursuant to a delegation agreement. Delegated examining authority must be exercised in accordance with civil service laws and regulations.
DEO Examiners/Staff	Agency representative(s) or staff member(s) operating under the agency's delegated examining authority. These individuals must be trained and certified by OPM in order to conduct delegated examining functions as stated in the agency's delegation examining agreement. (See Appendix A).
Direct-Hire Authority	Authority that permits hiring without regard to the provisions of 5 U.S.C. §§ 3309 through 3318, and 5 CFR Parts 211 and 337 subpart A.
Displaced Employee	A current agency employee serving under a competitive service appointment in tenure group I or II who has received a specific reduction in force (RIF) separation notice, or notice of proposed removal for declining a directed reassignment or transfer of function outside of the local commuting area. (See 5 CFR Part 330)
Dual Certification	The concurrent referral of an applicant to more than one position such as, multiple grades, specialties, and/or geographic locations from eligibility established under a particular job announcement or application procedure.
Education	Education is an indicator of proficiency that relates to course work completed by the candidate that is related to the competencies/KSAs needed to perform in the job.

Term	Definition
Elevator Operator	An individual whose primary duty is the running of freight or passenger elevators. The work includes opening and closing elevator gates and doors, working elevator controls, loading and unloading the elevator, giving information and directions to passengers such as on the location of offices, and reporting problems in running the elevator.
Eligible	An applicant who satisfies the minimum qualifications requirements for the position, and therefore is eligible for consideration. See also "candidate."
Erroneous Certification	A certificate involving the inadvertent misranking, noncertification, or failure to give bona fide consideration to an eligible in connection with a competitive Certificate of Eligibles.
Error of the Commission Principle	There is a 1917 Attorney General's decision (Civil Service - Erroneous Certification, April 19, 1917.31 U.S. Op. Att. Gen. 110, 1917. WL 729 (U.S.A.G.)). The Attorney General concluded that regularizing appointments from an erroneous certificate was unduly harsh to the selectee and contrary to the intent of Congress. The error of the commission is intended to correct administrative errors on the part of the examining office.
Excepted Service	A term used to describe all civil service positions that are not in either the competitive service or the Senior Executive Service. (See 5 CFR Part 213)
Experience	Experience is an indicator of proficiency that relates to the school, home, community, voluntary or work experiences of the candidate that are related to the competencies/KSAs needed to perform in the job.
Generic Rating Procedures	A procedure for rating applicants that can be applied to a variety of positions, due to the fact that the positions have the same general competency/KSA requirements, with the primary difference reflected in the technical specialty areas. Typically, generic rating procedures are most applicable to entry-level positions.
Guard	One who is assigned to a station, beat, or patrol area in a Federal building or a building under Federal control to prevent illegal entry of persons or property or the illegal removal of persons or property; or required to stand watch at or to patrol a Federal reservation, industrial area, or other area designated by Federal authority, in order to protect life and property; make observations for detection of fire, trespass, unauthorized removal of public property or hazards to Federal personnel or property.
Indicator of Proficiency	A source of evidence that a candidate possesses job-related competencies/KSAs (e.g., agency certification program, education, experience, professional activity, and professional certification).
Interagency Career Transition Assistance Program (ICTAP)	The Interagency Career Transition Assistance Plan (ICTAP) is a process by which employees who have been involuntarily separated may receive selection priority for jobs in agencies other than the one in which they were previously employed. (See Chapter 4 and 5 CFR Part 330)

Term	Definition
Interdisciplinary Position	A position involving duties and responsibilities closely related to more than one **professional** occupation. As a result, you could classify the position into two or more professional occupational series. The nature of the work is such that persons with education and experience in two or more professions may be considered equally well qualified to do the work. (See Chapter 6)
Job Analysis	A systematic method for gathering, documenting, and analyzing information about the content, context, and requirements of the job. It demonstrates that there is a clear relationship between the tasks performed on the job and the competencies/KSAs required to perform the tasks. Job analysis information is used to develop employee selection procedures, identify training needs, define performance standards, and other uses.
Job Announcement	A document that informs the public regarding a job vacancy. A job announcement describes the requirements of the job, and instructs applicants regarding how to apply for the vacancy. Job announcements must be posted on USAJOBS as a means of satisfying the public notice requirement.
Job-Relatedness	A standard met when the competencies or knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) in the rating procedure are shown through an analysis of the job to be necessary for successful job performance.
Knowledge	A body of information applied directly to the performance of a function.
KSAs	An acronym for "Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities." An applicant's qualifications for a position are often determined with reference to the KSAs that are relevant to successful performance in that position.
Lost Certification	The second type of erroneous certification that occurs when an applicant is misranked on or left off a certificate, but correcting the error would not give the eligible real employment consideration.
Lost Employment Consideration	A serious type of erroneous certification is the case where there is a violation of law: *Title 5 (Rule of Three)* and possibly the Veterans' Preference Act of 1944.
***Luevano* Consent Decree**	A court decree entered on November 19, 1981 by the United States District Court for the District of Columbia in the civil action known as *Luevano v. OPM* and numbered as No. 79-271. The decree became effective on January 18, 1982. The decree has as its purpose the elimination of adverse impact, if any, in the appointment of African Americans and Hispanics to a variety of positions at GS-05 and GS-07 formerly covered by the Professional and Administrative Career Examination (PACE).
Merit Promotion Procedures	A placement made under the authority of 5 CFR Part 335, "Promotion and Internal Placement." With certain important exceptions (e.g., VEOA) only career status employees may apply for positions that are to be filled under merit promotion procedures.

Term	Definition
Messenger	One who supervises or performs general messenger work (such as running errands, delivering messages, and answering call bells) or other light and simple manual or mechanical work, and incidentally performs miscellaneous tasks of a simple or routine nature.
Minimum Qualifications	Qualifications that an applicant must possess, at a minimum, to be eligible for hire or promotion under the competitive system. Minimum qualifications are typically expressed in terms of job-related years of experience or education, i.e., course credit hours or a combination of the two. Applicants who do not meet the minimum qualification requirements for the position receive no further consideration.
Multiple Certification	The concurrent referral of an applicant to more than one grade, specialty, and/or geographic location. Also known as "dual certification." (See Chapter 6)
National	A person who was born in an outlying possession of the United States on or after the date of formal acquisition of such possession (including American Samoa, Swains Island, and the Northern Mariana Islands), or who is a child of nationals under certain circumstances, or who meets other requirements described in law at 8 U.S.C. § 1408.
Non-Competitive Action	An appointment to or placement in a position in the competitive service that is not made by selection from an open competitive examination, and that is usually based on current or prior Federal service. A noncompetitive action includes (1) all of the types of actions described under inservice placement; (2) appointments of non-Federal employees whose public or private enterprise positions are brought into the competitive service under title 5 CFR Part 316.701; and (3) appointments and conversions to career and career-conditional employment made under special authorities covered in 5 CFR Part 315.
Notice of Results	A letter that notifies an applicant of the status of his or her application.
Objection	An objection is an agency's request to remove an eligible from consideration on a particular certificate.
Open Periods	The period during which applications may be submitted for consideration. The duration of the open period must be sufficient enough to provide adequate public notice of the vacancy, and must be clearly specified in the job announcement. OPM recommends that agencies prescribe an open period of no fewer than five (5) calendar days.
Outstanding Scholar	A hiring program created by the *Luevano* Consent Decree. This program permits the hiring of any individual with a baccalaureate degree who has at least a 3.5 grade point average on a 4.0 scale or is in the top 10 percent of his or her graduating class (or of a major subdivision, such as a College of Arts and Sciences).
Pass over Request	An objection filed against a preference eligible that if sustained, would result in the selection of a non-preference eligible.

Term	Definition
Preference Eligible	A veteran, spouse, widow, or mother, who meets the definition provided in 5 U.S.C. § 2108. Preference eligibles are entitled to have 5 or 10 points added to their earned score on a civil service examination (See 5 U.S.C. § 3309). Preference does not apply, however, to in-service placement action such as promotions.
Pre-rated Competitor Inventory	A list of eligibles that have been rated and ranked and placed in the order in which they are certified, by option and grade. This type of listing has traditionally been called a register, and applications are referred to as being "pre-rated" or "front-end-rated".
Priority Consideration	Special placement priority that is given to a candidate who was previously denied consideration due to erroneous or lost consideration. (See Chapter 6.)
Professional Activity	A professional activity is evidence of substantial contributions to a profession that is related to the competencies/KSAs needed to perform the job.
Professional Certification	A professional certification is an indicator of proficiency that takes into account the certification that is issued and recognized by a specific general professional community or industry that demonstrates a person's proficiency in the competencies/KSAs needed to perform the job.
Public Notice	The process of disseminating job vacancy information in a manner that assures that persons seeking Federal employment will have the opportunity to apply for the vacancy. Public notice explains to jobseekers when, where and how to apply for a Federal job. Public notice is required whenever you are considering hiring candidates from outside the Federal workforce for competitive service positions.
Quality Categories	Groupings of individuals with similar levels of job-related knowledge, skills, abilities, or competencies.
Quality Level Rating Procedures	A rating procedure in which candidates are assigned ratings on qualifying experience and training according to a single quality level. Typically, three quality levels are used: "exceptional," "good," and "minimally qualified." Also referred to as the "A-C-E" rating procedure. (See Chapter 5)
Quality Ranking Factors	Quality ranking factors are competencies/KSAs that are expected to enhance performance in a position. Unlike selective factors, quality ranking factors are not used as a "screen out" factor.
Rating Procedures	A single, comprehensive, documented process with specific criteria for making consistent and job-related determinations about the relative qualifications of applicants for a position.
Rating Schedules	"See Crediting Plan."
Reemployment Priority List (RPL)	A list of employees within the local commuting area who have been separated from your agency due to reduction in force (RIF) or work-related injury. If an employee on the RPL is qualified for a vacancy that exists within his or her local commuting area, you must (with few exceptions) select that employee before hiring anyone from outside the agency. (See 5 CFR Part 330.)

Term	Definition
Reinstatement	Non-competitive appointment of a person formerly employed in the competitive service (i.e., who either had a competitive status or was serving probation when separated) into the competitive service as a career or career-conditional employee. (See 5 CFR Part 315)
Reinstatement Eligibility	The conditions under which a person may be reinstated into the competitive service. (See 5 CFR Part 315)
Rule of Three	When selecting from a certificate of eligibles, an appointing officer must, with sole reference to merit and fitness, make a selection for the first vacancy from the highest three eligibles available for appointment on the certificate.
Schedule A Appointment	A category of excepted service appointment that is applicable to positions that are not of a confidential or policy-determining character, and that are not in the Senior Executive Service, but for which it is impracticable to apply competitive examining requirements (e.g., qualification standards). Agencies must obtain authorization from OPM to make a Schedule A appointment. (See 5 CFR Part 213)
Schedule B Appointment	A category of excepted service appointment that is applicable to positions that are not of a confidential or policy-determining character, and that are not in the Senior Executive Service, but for which it is impracticable to hold open competition or to apply the usual competitive examining procedures. Candidates appointed under Schedule B authority must meet the basic qualification requirements established by OPM for the occupation and grade level. Agencies must obtain authorization from OPM to make a Schedule B appointment. (See 5 CFR Part 213)
Schedule C Appointment	A category of excepted service appointment that is applicable to positions that are of a confidential or policy-determining nature. Agencies must obtain authorization from OPM to make a Schedule C appointment. (See 5 CFR Part 213.)
Selectee	A person selected for appointment to a position.
Selecting Official	See "Appointing Officer."
Selective Factor	A KSA, competency, or special qualification without which a candidate could not perform the duties of a position in a satisfactory manner. Selective factors are applied in addition to minimum qualifications. Applicants who do not meet a selective factor are ineligible for further consideration.
Senior Executive Service (SES)	The employment system that applies to any positions that are classified above GS-15 and involve executive management and high policy-making responsibilities. SES positions are excluded from the competitive service, the system of rules and regulations that applies to most civil service positions. (See 5 CFR Part 214.)

Term	Definition
Severe Shortage of Candidates	A severe shortage of candidates for a particular position or group of positions means that an agency is unable to identify candidates possessing the competencies required to perform the job requirements despite extensive recruitment, extended announcement periods, and the use, as applicable, of hiring flexibilities such as recruitment and relocation incentives.
Skill	An observable competence to perform a learned psychomotor act.
Standing Inventory	An inventory of eligible competitors who are assigned a numerical rating and certified in score order by occupation, grade, location, etc. Standing inventories are effective when many recurring vacancies are anticipated over time.
Status Applicant	An applicant who has satisfied requirements for competitive status.
Status Employee	A current Federal employee who has competitive status.
Structured Interview	An assessment method in which candidate's job-related competencies/KSAs are evaluated using standard questions that are scored systematically using predetermined criteria or benchmarks for all interviews for a particular job. The benchmarks provide behaviorally-specific examples of what constitutes high, medium, and low levels of proficiency. In each structured interview, the applicant is asked the same questions in the same sequence, and his or her responses are scored according to the predetermined criteria or benchmarks.
Subject Matter Expert (SME)	A person with bona fide expert knowledge about what it takes to do a particular job. First-level supervisors are normally good SMEs. Superior incumbents in the same or very similar positions and other individuals can also be used as SMEs if they have current and thorough knowledge of the job's requirements.
Surplus Employee	A current agency employee serving under an appointment in the competitive service, in tenure group I or II, who has received a Certification of Expected Separation or other official certification issued by the agency indicating that the position is surplus. (See 5 CFR Part 330)
Temporary Appointment	A nonstatus appointment to a competitive service position for a specific time period not to exceed one year. (See 5 CFR Part 316)
Term Appointment	A nonstatus appointment to a position in the competitive service for a specific period of more than one year and lasting not more than four years. (See 5 CFR Part 316)
Test	An evaluation of a candidate's job-related competencies/KSAs using a series of questions (e.g., true-false, fill-in-the-blank, matching, and multiple choice) or exercises that are administered in a paper-and-pencil or computer format.
Test Administrator (TA)	A person trained and certified by OPM to administer OPM written tests. Only OPM-certified Test Administrators may administer OPM-developed written tests.

Term	Definition
Test Security and Control Officer (TSCO)	A person who has been trained and certified in test security by OPM. A Test Security and Control Officer has overall responsibility for assuring that agency Test Administrators follow OPM guidance in administering OPM tests, and is also responsible for requesting, securing, and controlling test materials.
Top-of-the-Register	See "Rule of Three."
Transmutation Table	A mathematical table that is used to convert raw scores obtained by applicants to ratings between 70 and 100. (See Appendix J)
USAJOBS	A website that provides the public with comprehensive information regarding federal employment. Agencies must post their job vacancy announcements on USAJOBS as part of the public notice requirement.
USA Staffing	An automated examining system that was developed by OPM and is available to agencies on a reimbursable basis.
Validity	The degree that the assessment tool measures the competencies/KSAs important for job performance, i.e., people who score higher on the assessment will do better on the job.
Veterans' Preference	A special privilege that entitles qualifying veterans to certain advantages in consideration for federal employment.
Well-qualified Employee	Under CTAP and ICTAP, an eligible employee whose competencies/KSAs clearly exceed the minimum qualification requirements for the position. (See 5 CFR Part 330)
Work Sample Assessment	An assessment method in which a candidate's job-related competencies/KSAs are evaluated based on work-specific activity or simulation of a work activity. A writing sample is an example of a work sample assessment.

Appendix A - Sample Interagency Delegated Examining Agreement

The interagency agreement is how OPM delegates examining authority to agencies. The following is the standard interagency agreement currently being used. This document has been previously modified and may be modified again in the future.

Interagency Agreement Number
Between the
Office of Personnel Management (OPM)
And the
[Agency]

This document is a two-part agreement between the above-named parties which contains a delegation of examining authority, sets forth the terms and conditions for reimbursable services when the **[agency]** has requested such services from OPM, and establishes special terms and conditions for agency use of OPM examining instruments covered by the _Luevano_ consent decree.

I. The Delegation Agreement

A. Authority

Under the provision of 5 U.S.C. § 1104, as amended by Public Law 104-52 (1995), this Delegation Agreement authorizes the **[agency]** to examine applicants for the positions indicated for its own agency, or for positions at another Federal agency. OPM delegates examining authority at the headquarters level. While agencies may decide which activity carries this authority out and the extent to which the activity exercises it, the authority itself may not be redelegated.

B. Positions Covered

Title 5 competitive service positions for all series and grade levels nationwide except Administrative Law Judge positions. Competitive examining for positions covered under the _Luevano_ consent decree is subject to Section III of this agreement.

C. Effective Date of the Agreement

This agreement will become effective upon execution by both parties.

D. Applicable Laws and Regulations

All examining activities initiated under this agreement must conform with the requirements of Federal laws, rules, regulations, Executive Orders, applicable court orders and, where applicable, specific operational procedures prescribed in the Delegated Examining Operations Handbook to ensure compliance with these requirements.

E. Responsibilities of the Parties

OPM Responsibilities

OPM will:

a. Provide operating guidelines and basic technical assistance through training and the Delegated Examining Operations Handbook.

b. Perform initial certification and periodic recertification training of staff.

c. Provide job seekers with up-to-date information about job opportunities and application procedures through the USAJOBS government-wide automated employment information systems.

d. Make final decisions on:

   i. Adverse suitability determinations, unless OPM has delegated to the head of the **[Agency]** authority to adjudicate such determinations, in accordance with OPM's suitability regulations at 5 CFR part 731 et seq. If such delegation to the agency has occurred, an individual delegation agreement for suitability will be issued separately.

   ii. All adverse medical determinations of preference eligibles (5 CFR 339.306).

   iii. All objections based on qualifications which would result in the Passover of a compensable preference (CP) eligible with a disability of 30% or more. (5 U.S.C. § 3318).

e. Establish and maintain an oversight program to ensure that activities including any competitive examining work performed for the agency through the use of contractors under any authority delegated under 5 U.S.C. § 1104(a) are in accordance with the merit system principles and the standards established under 5 U.S.C.§ 1104(b)(1) and support mission accomplishment. Any actions contrary to any law, rule, regulation, or any OPM established standard shall be corrected as required by OPM (5 U.S.C. § 1104 (c)).

Agency Responsibilities

The **[Agency]** will:

a. Ensure adequate competition for positions in the competitive service by recruiting sufficient numbers of well-qualified candidates for consideration.

b. Provide public notice of the opportunity to compete. As required under 5 U.S.C. § 3327 and 3330, all jobs must be listed in the USAJOBS government-wide automated employment information system.

c. Determine appropriate public notice and length of open periods for receipt of applications by considering the nature of the positions covered by the examination, their career potential and the mobility/availability characteristics of the appropriate labor market. Notice periods of less than five calendar days must be documented in the examining file to show the examining office's rationale. OPM transmits public notice material electronically to State employment service offices nationwide.

d. Establish policies and procedure on the acceptance and processing of applications from all candidates including status applicants. Filing instructions and conditions must be specified clearly in the vacancy announcement.

e. Develop applicant assessment procedures (5 CFR part 300, subpart A).

f. Not modify Standards in the Operating Handbook, Qualification Standards for General Schedule Positions, without prior OPM approval unless otherwise authorized in the General Policies and Instructions section of the Handbook.

g. Rate applications, notify applicants of the status of their applications, including assigned ratings if and when requested, and provide a procedure for applicants to request reconsideration of their ratings. The same procedure may be incorporated into the agency administrative grievance system or alternative dispute resolution system and used for agency employed applicants who grieve an assigned rating.

    i.   Refer issues involving ineligibility based on suitability consideration to OPM for review and final approval, unless OPM has delegated to the head of the [agency] authority to adjudicate suitability determinations, in accordance with OPM's suitability regulations at 5 CFR part 731 et seq.

    ii.   Refer ineligible determinations on preference eligibles based on medical considerations to OPM for review and final approval.

    iii. Make determinations on veteran preference claims, including claims for spouse or mother preference based on the service-connected disability of a veteran.

h. Administer and score written tests. Individuals administering OPM tests must be trained and certified by OPM.

i. Issue certificates of eligibles, audit certificates, and establish objection/passover procedures. OPM will retain final approval authority on:

   i. Objections/Passovers based on suitability considerations as provided in item g(i) above.

   ii. Objections/Passovers based on medical considerations of preference eligibles (5 CFR 339.306).

   iii. Objections based on qualifications which would result in the passover of a Compensable Preference eligible with a disability of 30% or more. (5 U.S.C. § 3318)

j. Apply veterans preference provisions of title 5, United States Code, including, but not limited to:

   5 U.S.C. § 3305 (competitive service; examinations; when held)
   5 U.S.C. § 3309 (additional points for examinations)
   5 U.S.C. § 3311 (examining credit for military service)
   5 U.S.C. § 3313 (register order of eligibles)
   5 U.S.C. § 3314 (restoration to the register of preference eligibles who resign)
   5 U.S.C. § 3315 (restoration to the register of preference eligibles who have been furloughed or separated)
   5 U.S.C. § 3317 (certification and selection from top-three register eligibles)

k. Approve selective and quality-ranking factors identified and documented through analysis of the position.

l. Make determinations on conversion to career or career-conditional appointment.

m. Make determinations on exceptions to the time-in-grade restriction when an employee is within reach on a register for competitive appointment to the position to be filled (5 CFR 300.603).

n. Make determinations on exceptions to time-after-competitive appointment restriction (5 CFR 330.501).

o. Operate examining activities in conformance with the agency's career transition assistance plan.

p. Provide for a procedure whereby staff involved in delegated examining activities notify their supervisor in writing when they intend to apply for a position covered by this agreement which is handled by the delegated examining organization where they work. Employees must give similar notice if they know that a relative or a member of their household intends to apply. Such employees should be appropriately monitored or

segregated from the examining and certification process. This includes subject matter experts who participate in the development of assessments or ranking of candidates.

q. Develop and print any forms necessary for examining operations. Forms that collect information directly from the public must be cleared with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). (See 5 CFR part 1320 or Standard Form 83-A.)

r. Ensure that maintenance of the records used to implement the delegation of authority, that are maintained as a system of records subject to the Privacy Act, is consistent with OPM's Government-wide system of records (OPM/GOVT-5) and the Privacy Act. Any request for changes to the OPM system notices or regulations may be submitted, through the agency headquarters, to the Associate Director for Employment Service, Office of Personnel Management, Washington, DC 20415.

s. Adhere to OPM's schedule of records retention/disposition.

t. Provide quarterly reports to OPM on such measures as will be required by OPM to fulfill its oversight and program management responsibility.

u. Take such corrective action as OPM may require. (5 U.S.C. § 1104(c)).

v. Establish and maintain an internal accountability system designed to assure that the use of delegated examining authorities is in compliance with law and merit system principles. This system will be subject to regular periodic management review by OPM.

w. Conduct annual audits of delegated examining activities using staff not associated with delegated examining activities and certify completion of the audit to OPM. The **[agency]** must maintain a list of all discrepancies and corrective actions for a period of three years after the audit. Annual audit procedures may be incorporated into the agency's internal accountability system.

x. Comply with the data collection and reporting requirements under the <u>Luevano</u> Consent Decree.

y. Notify OPM of changes in delegated examining offices, including new delegated examining offices, termination, etc.

z. Ensure that individuals responsible for delegated examining activities, including those conducting the annual audits have completed initial certification training and are currently certified to perform this work.

F. Termination, Suspension or Revocation

1. This agreement may be terminated at any time by either party with 90 days advance notice to OPM. In such cases, the [agency] would not be able to fill positions using competitive examining procedures.

2. Certification of delegated examining activity may be revoked or suspended at any time by OPM.

G. Amendment or Modification

Any amendment or modification of this agreement must be in writing and agreed by both OPM and the **[agency]**. This agreement will automatically be renewed each fiscal year unless a termination notice is provided by one party to the other.

II. Terms and Conditions for OPM Providing Examining Services and Other Staffing Related Services on a Reimbursable Basis

Should the **[agency]** request OPM to provide any examining and/or other staffing related services on a reimbursable basis, the following terms and conditions apply. Signature of this delegation agreement constitutes agreement with these terms in the event that the **[agency]** requests OPM to perform reimbursable services.

A. Authority

OPM may provide any examining and/or other staffing related services on a reimbursable basis. (5 U.S.C. §§ 1104 and 1304 and 31 U.S.C. § 1535).

1. Services Covered

Under this agreement OPM agrees to provide examining and/or other staffing-related services as specified on OPM Form 1616, or other funding document, for the prices listed in the official OPM Service and Pricing Guide for the current fiscal year.

2. Funding for the Agreement

Upon execution of a funding document, an agreed upon dollar amount will be obligated to OPM. OPM will notify the **[agency]** in writing on a monthly or other agreed upon basis of the costs incurred.

3. **Disputes and Termination**

   Termination of an agreement for reimbursable services by either party must be provided to the other party in writing. If termination of an agreement is to occur prior to the end of the fiscal year, OPM will be entitled to retain sufficient funds as necessary to cover the expenses incurred for terminating the agreement and will provide a final accounting of those expenses to the **[agency]** 60 days after receipt of the termination notice. Upon termination of the agreement prior to the end of the fiscal year, all of the **[agency]**'s funds not obligated prior to the termination notice will be returned to the **[agency]** 30 days after the termination.

4. **Amendments or Modifications of Reimbursable Agreements**

   Any amendments or modifications of reimbursable agreements must be in writing and agreed to by both OPM and the **[agency]**.

_____   _____

(Signature)   **(Signature)**
U.S. Office of Personnel Management   **[agency]**

_____   _____

(Date)   **(Date)**

Appendix B - Vendor Criteria List

The following list outlines criteria that you may want to consider when choosing a contractor.

Vendor Criteria

1. Determine the length of time that the vendor has been administering and/or distributing selection assessments.

2. Determine the largest applicant pool the vendor has assessed.

3. Determine if the vendor has ever had legal action taken against it for an assessment that it developed or administered.
   If it has, determine the nature of the actions taken and the outcome of those actions.

4. Determine the number of individuals with advanced Psychometrics training and/or experience that the vendor has on staff.

5. Request documentation and evidence that demonstrate the security of the vendor's testing environments, applicants' data and information, test information, etc.

6. Request technical and non-technical reports that detail the vendor's progress in delivering the contracted services and/or goods. The length, depth, frequency, and necessity of these reports should be mutually agreed upon prior to the engagement of contractual activities.

7. Request information detailing the typical cost for using one of the vendor's assessments (both per applicant and set-up costs).

8. Insure that the vendor has validation evidence for each of the assessments it administers, and request these materials as appropriate.

9. Request a summary detailing application reaction data for each of the vendor's assessments (i.e., the perceived fairness and validity of the test by test takers), if obtainable and applicable.

10. Request information summarizing the adverse impact of each of the vendor's assessments, as appropriate.

11. Insure that the vendor's assessments are adaptable for individuals requiring assistance, as outlined in the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

12. Determine the vendor's ability to construct/develop new assessments.

13. Determine the vendor's ability to administer and score multiple forms of the same assessment.

14. Determine the vendor's ability to administer and score essay and short-answer examinations.

15. Determine if the vendor administers assessments in languages other than English.

   - If yes, request evidence demonstrating the comparability of these assessments with the English versions, as appropriate.

16. Determine the average data delivery, scoring time needed by the vendor for a typical assessment (e.g., multiple-choice format).

17. Request information detailing the typical costs incurred for changes made to an assessment once it has been "put into" the vendor's delivery platform.

18. Determine whether the vendor has ever used third parties or ever anticipates using third parties (i.e., outside consultants, sub-contractors) to fulfill contractual obligations.

   - If the vendor has or does anticipate using third parties, request a detailed list specifying the parties used and the (fulfilled/current/anticipated) nature of the scope of the parties' roles.

Appendix C - Records Retention and Disposition Schedule

The following schedule provides guidance regarding the length of time that specific types of documents generated by delegated examining offices (DEOs) must be retained.

Item	Title and Description of Records	Disposition
GENERAL:		
1	**Examining delegation agreements** under the authority of 5 U.S.C. § 1104.	Destroy three (3) years after termination of agreement.
2	**Reports of internal annual reviews** of delegated examining operations.	Destroy three (3) years after date of report.
3	**Correspondence** concerning: ▪ Applications, ▪ Certification of eligibles, and ▪ All other examining and recruiting operations. Such correspondence includes, but is not limited to, correspondence from the Congress, White House, and the general public.	Break annually. Destroy one (1) year after break.
TESTING		
4	**Correspondence** relating to the shipment of examination papers and test material.	Break annually. Destroy one (1) year after break.
5	**Stock control records of examination test material**, including running inventory of test material in stock.	Destroy when test is superseded or obsolete.
6	**Written test answer sheets** for both eligibles and ineligibles.	Destroy six (6) months after date of processing.
7	**Lost or exposed test material case files** showing the circumstances of loss, the nature of the recovery and corrective actions taken.	Break closed files annually. Destroy five (5) years after break.
8	**Correspondence** concerning accommodations for holding examinations.	Break annually. Destroy one (1) year after break.
REGISTER/STANDING INVENTORY		
9	**Certificate Control/Log System:** Records of information (e.g., receipt date, series and grade of position, duty station) pertaining to requests for lists of eligibles from a register or standing inventory.	Break annually. Destroy two (2) years after break. **Retain records for a total of three years.**
10	**Register of Eligibles** (Documents the eligibility of an individual for Federal jobs).	Destroy two (2) years after the date on which the register is terminated.

Item	Title and Description of Records	Disposition
11	**Documentation File** consisting of • correspondence regarding examination, • final version of the announcement(s) issued, • subsequent amendments to the announcement(s), • USAJOBS posting documentation, • rating schedule, • job analysis documentation, • record of selective and quality rating factors used, • rating procedures, • transmutation tables, and • other documents associated with the job announcement(s) and the development of the register or standing inventory.	Destroy two (2) years after termination of the related register.
12	**Eligible Applications** on registers or standing inventories. (a) Active applications (b) Inactive applications	(a) Destroy 90 days after termination of the register. Retain all applications that may be brought forward to a new register. (b). Break annually. Destroy one (1) year after break.

Item	Title and Description of Records	Disposition
13	**Certificate Case File** consisting of ▪ SF-39, Request for a Referral of Eligibles, ▪ SF-39A (or equivalent documents), ▪ vacancy announcement (if applicable), ▪ list of eligible candidates screened for the vacancy, ▪ rating sheet with the assignment of ratings, ▪ availability statements, ▪ the certificate of eligibles issued to the selecting official, ▪ the annotated certificate of eligibles returned from the selecting official, and ▪ other documentation upon which the certificate of eligibles was based. **NOTE:** The certificate case file should be arranged to permit reconstruction or validation of actions taken in the event of appeal or legal action.	Break annually. Destroy two (2) years after break. **Retain records for a total of three years.** **NOTE:** If the examination upon which a certificate is based is under litigation, then the certificate case file must be retained indefinitely. See "Examinations Under Litigation," below.
14	**Cancelled and ineligible applications** including the application, supplemental forms, and attachments submitted with the applications.	Break annually. Destroy one (1) year after break.
15	**Correspondence** or notices received from eligibles indicating a change in name, address, or availability.	Destroy 90 days after updating the appropriate record in the register.
CASE EXAMINING		
16	**Certificate Control/Log System:** Records of information (e.g., receipt date, series and grade of position, duty station) pertaining to requests for lists of eligibles.	Break annually. Destroy two (2) years after break. **Retain records for a total of three years.**

Item	Title and Description of Records	Disposition
17	**Certificate Case File** consisting of: • SF-39, Request for a Referral of Eligibles, • SF-39A (or equivalent documents), • vacancy announcement with Supplemental Qualifications Statement (if applicable), • public notice documentation (for example, a printed copy of the job listing from the USAJOBS database), • position description, • rating schedule, • record of selective and quality ranking factors used, • job analysis documentation, • list of eligibles screened for the vacancy • rating sheet with the assignment of ratings, • processing documents (e.g., OPM Forms 1203), • availability statements, • the certificate of eligibles issued to the selecting official, • the annotated certificate of eligibles returned from the selecting official, and • other documentation upon which the certificate of eligibles was based. **NOTE:** The certificate case file should be arranged to permit reconstruction or validation of actions taken in the event of appeal or legal action.	Break annually. Destroy two (2) years after break. **Retain records for a total of three years.** **NOTE:** If the examination upon which a certificate is based is under litigation, then the certificate case file must be retained indefinitely. See "Examinations Under Litigation," below.
18	**Eligible Applications** that are not referred to the selecting official must be retained in the case examining file. Eligible applications that are returned to the DEO by the selecting official must also be retained in the case examining file. Materials to be retained include OF-612, resume, or equivalent, and Forms 1203-AW (Form C).	Break annually. Destroy two (2) years after break. **Retain records for a total of three years.**
19	**Ineligible Applications** consisting of the OF-612, resume, or equivalent and OPM Forms 1203-AW (Form C) with rating sheet are included in the case examining file.	Break annually. Destroy two (2) years after break. **Retain records for a total of three years.**

Item	Title and Description of Records	Disposition
20	**Incomplete Applications** consisting of the application, supplemental forms or attachments submitted with the application are included in the case examining file.	Break annually. Destroy two (2) years after break. **Retain records for a total of three years.**
EXAMINATIONS UNDER LITIGATION:		
21	All examination materials associated with positions covered by the *Luevano* Consent Decree (including Administrative Careers with America, Outstanding Scholar and Bilingual/bicultural positions) including vacancy announcement files, applications, supplemental forms, certificate case files, etc.	Break annually. Retain until further notice from OPM.
22	All materials associated with examinations under litigation, including vacancy announcement files, applications, supplemental forms, certificate case files, etc.	Break annually. Retain until further notice from OPM.

Appendix D – Administrative Careers With America, Alternative Assessments, and Other Hiring Program Positions

Below is the list of positions covered.

Series	Position Titles
0011	Bond Sales Promotion
0018	Safety and Occupational Health Management
0020	Community Planning*
0023	Outdoor Recreation Planning
0025	Park Ranger
0028	Environmental Protection Specialist
0080	Security Administration
0101	Social Science* **
0105	Social Insurance Administration
0106	Unemployment Insurance
0107	Health Insurance Administration
0110	Economics*
0130	Foreign Affairs*
0131	International Relations*
0132	Intelligence
0140	Manpower Research and Analysis*
0142	Manpower Development
0150	Geography*
0170	History*
0180	Psychology*
0184	Sociology*
0187	Social Services
0190	General Anthropology*
0193	Archeology*
0201	Human Resources Management Former covered title and series: ▪ Personnel Management (0201); ▪ Military Personnel Management (0205); ▪ Personnel Staffing (0212); ▪ Position Classification (0221); ▪ Occupational Analysis (0222); ▪ Salary and Wage Administration (0223); ▪ Employee Relations (0230); ▪ Labor Relations (0233); and ▪ Employee Development (0235).
0244	Labor Management Relations Examining
0246	Contractor Industrial Relations (Cancelled moved to 1101)
0249	Wage and Hour Compliance
0301	Miscellaneous Administration and Program**
0341	Administrative Officer

Series	Position Titles
0343	Program Management and Program Analysis
0346	Logistics Management
0391	Telecommunications Specialist
0501	Financial Administration and Programs**
0526	Tax Technician (Series renamed Tax Specialist)
0560	Budget Analysis
0570	Financial Institution Examining
0673	Hospital Housekeeping Management
0685	Public Health Program Specialist
0901	General Legal and Kindred Administration Former covered title and series: ▪ Federal Retirement Benefits (0270); ▪ Contact Representative (Two-grade interval position) (0962); and ▪ General Claims Examining (Two-grade interval position) (0990).
0950	Paralegal Specialist
0958	Pension Law Specialist
0965	Land Law Examining
0967	Passport and Visa Examining
0987	Tax Law Examining
0991	Worker's Compensation Claims Examining
0993	Railroad Retirement Claims Examining
0994	Unemployment Compensation Claims Examining (Cancelled)
0996	Veterans Claims Examining
1001	General Arts and Information**
1015	Museum Management (Curator)*
1035	Public Affairs
1082	Writing and Editing
1083	Technical Writing and Editing
1101	General Business and Industry** Former covered title and series: ▪ Contractor Industrial relations (0246)
1102	Contracting Series*
1103	Industrial Property Management
1104	Property Disposal
1130	Public Utilities Specialist
1140	Trade Specialist
1145	Agricultural Program Specialist
1146	Agricultural Marketing
1147	Agricultural Market Reporting
1150	Industrial Specialist
1160	Financial Analysis
1163	Insurance Examining
1165	Loan Specialist

Series	Position Titles
1169	Internal Revenue Officer
1170	Realty
1171	Appraising
1173	Housing Management Specialist
1176	Building Management
1412	Technical Information Services
1420	Archivist*
1421	Archives Specialist
1654	Printing Management Specialist*
1701	General Education and Training * **
1715	Vocational Rehabilitation
1720	Educational Program*
1801	General Inspection, Investigation, and Compliance** Restricted to following positions and agencies: ▪ Civil Aviation Security Specialist (FAA Only), ▪ Center Adjudication Officer (INS Only), ▪ District Adjudication Officer (INS Only)
1810	General Investigator**
1811	Criminal Investigator**
1812	Game Law Enforcement
1816	Immigration Inspection
1831	Securities Compliance Examining
1854	Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms Inspection
1864	Public Health Quarantine Inspection
1889	Import Specialist
1890	Customs Inspection
1910	Quality Assurance Specialist
2001	General Supply**
2003	Supply Program Management
2010	Inventory Management
2030	Distribution Facilities and Storage Management
2032	Packaging
2050	Supply Cataloging
2101	Transportation Specialist**
2110	Transportation Industry Analysis
2125	Highway Safety
2130	Traffic Management
2150	Transportation Operations
2210	Computer Specialist (Trainee, Alternative B Qualifications) Former covered title and series: ▪ Computer Specialist (Trainee, Alternative B Qualifications) (0334)

Description of Symbols (*, **)	Each symbol stands for: * = Series have specific educational requirements ** = For positions formerly covered under the Professional and Administrative Careers Examination (PACE)

Appendix E - Handbook for Agency Test Administrators and Test Control Officers

The purpose of this Appendix is to provide test administration procedures to be followed by your agency personnel when using OPM test materials. The authority to use OPM test materials and administer written tests is delegated to you under the provisions of Title 5 U.S.C. § 1104.

Responsibilities

How to nominate candidates

If you want to nominate candidates for test administrators and test control officers, you are required to submit three copies of OPM Form1660-B (Attachment) to your local OPM Service Center. After OPM action, we keep the original copy, and two copies are returned to you for your records.

OPM personnel acting upon Federal agencies' nominations should be satisfied that the nominees have the necessary competencies/KSAs to independently administer written tests, and secure test material before approving such requests.

Responsibilities of an agency test administrator

Your agency test administrator conducts OPM written tests in accordance with OPM guidelines and directions provided by your test control officer.

The agency test administrator should:

- Be trained and approved by OPM;
- Be thoroughly familiar with the procedures and instructions in this Handbook;
- Notify your agency test control officer when a family household member or a personal acquaintance is scheduled for a test he/she is to administer; and
- Notify your agency test control officer if he/she is scheduled to take either a competitive or noncompetitive OPM test.

Responsibilities of an agency test control officer

An Agency Test Control Officer has overall responsibility for assuring that agency test administrators who are conducting tests follow OPM guidance. The Test Control Officer is responsible for requesting written test material and for the security and control of test material while it is in your agency's possession.

The Agency Test Control Officer should:

- Ensure that agency test administrator nominees complete the required training conducted by OPM before they administer a written test;
- Ensure that agency test administrators do not administer tests to members of their family or household, or to personal acquaintances;
- Obtain a series of a test not previously used by an agency test administrator when that individual's family member, household member or personal acquaintance is scheduled for the test;
- Notify OPM when an agency test administrator is scheduled to take a competitive or noncompetitive test for purposes of reassignment or promotion, and arrange for a test series not previously used by the test administrator;
- Requisition and safeguard test material in accordance with the procedures set forth in this Handbook;
- Receive test material, immediately open the package and inventory the material. If the package is incomplete, immediately notify the appropriate OPM Service Center;
- Notify the appropriate OPM Service Center when test material is lost or compromised. Coordinate and/or conduct an investigation and prepare a report of finding as directed by OPM;
- Be trained and approved by OPM if he/she intends to also serve as an agency test administrator;
- Instruct agency mailroom staff to deliver the unopened test material envelopes and packages containing test material (identified by the X label) directly to the agency test control officer/assistant; and
- Ensure test material is returned to the Denver Distribution Center (DDC) within established time limits.

Initial Training

Contact your local OPM Service Center to obtain training as test administrators and test control officers prior to approving agency nominations. Training will include test material control/security and test administration practices and processes.

Refresher Training

It is required that refresher training for your agency test administrators and test control officer occur at least every two years.

Test Materials

Ordering test materials

You can order materials, for each location you want test materials to be shipped directly, by submitting an:

OPM Form 1291 (Requisition, Transmittal, and Receipt for Assembled Examination); and Master Requisition Form.

Note: You can obtain OPM Form 1291 and Master Requisition Form through your local OPM Service Center, who will then contact OPM's Denver Distribution Center (DDC). You should keep four copies of OPM Form 1291 for your records.

To order test materials conduct the following steps:

Step	Action
1	You should submit to your local OPM Service Center: Part 1 and four copies of part 2 from OPM Form 1291; and One copy of the Master Requisition Form.
2	Your local OPM Service Center will: Review, approve, sign, and date the Master Requisition Form; Retain a copy of each form; and Forward the remainder to the DDC within two days of receipt.
3	You will: Retain Part 3 of OPM Form 1291(Blue Copy); and A copy of the Master Requisition for your records.
4	DDC ships: The test material directly to your test control officer along with part 1 and two copies of Part 2 from OPM Form 1291. Part 1 of OPM Form 1291 is used as the mailing label and is affixed to the package containing the test material. A large "X" in the left hand corner signifies test material in the package.
5	Upon receipt of the test material, your test control officer should: • Immediately open the package and inventory the material. • If the package is incomplete, your local OPM Service Center should be promptly notified. The Service Center will, in turn, contact the DDC to correct the discrepancy.

When to order test materials

You should allow 15 working days before the test date for receipt of material from DDC. If materials are not received within three days prior to the scheduled test session, immediately contact your local OPM Service Center.

Restrictions on ordering

You can only order test material for a specific test, and cannot use that material for any other test. You should not hold test material longer than 30 days after the test is administered.

The DDC will follow-up with you on materials not returned within 45 days of the test date and will contact the appropriate local OPM Service Center about material not returned within 60 days of the test date.

Securing test material

Test materials must be stored in a locked cabinet (5 CFR 300):

- Without outside labeling;
- With a metal bar run through all cabinet drawer handles;
- Secured with a clasp and a combination lock or heavy-duty padlock. If padlocks are used the number of keys must be limited to test control officers and/or assistants and locked in secure areas;
- Locked at all times except when material is being removed or returned; and
- Never left opened or unattended.

Limit access

Access to the cabinets must be limited to test control officers and/or assistants, who will also be the only authorized personnel to know lock combination numbers (5 CFR 300).

Transporting test materials

Test materials must be transported from the storage cabinet to the test room in a locked container, and must <u>never</u> be left unattended (5 CFR 300). Contact your local OPM Service Center if the test materials are not returned within 60 days of the test date.

Returning test material

When returning both used and unused test material directly to DDC (via Federal Express), you must include a copy of Part 2 from OPM Form 1291 with the material and send the remaining copy of Part 2 to your local OPM Service Center. Both copies of Part 2 should fully identify the used and unused material going back to the DDC, and should be signed and dated.

Envelopes or packages containing test material received from the DDC are identified by a large "X" on the package, as described above. Such packages must not be opened by mailroom

personnel or distributed with your agency's regular mail. You must notify your mailroom personnel about these requirements prior to making your first order for test material.

Administering the Test

Introduction

Administering the written test is perhaps the most important aspect of the examining process. The atmosphere the test administrator creates in the test room and the attitude the test administrator displays in performing his/her duties is extremely important. The test administrator's manner, bearing, and attitude may well inspire confidence in competitors and put them at ease while participating in the testing process.

Test administrators should make certain that they and their monitors are well prepared to administer the test. There is an understandable tendency on the part of some test administrators to develop their own style of conducting tests because they have conducted the same test many times and are certain that they can do it correctly. While we encourage the creation of a personal style in establishing a good relationship with competitors, we consider it equally important that test administrators not deviate from the directions for conducting the test. The following material should serve as a reminder of decisions to be made before, during, and after each test. In addition, it should eliminate confusion and uncertainty that sometimes arises when administering tests.

Preparation for the test

It is important for test administrators to understand the nature and purpose of the particular test. What type of test is being given? What job(s) is it used to fill? What is the reason for giving this particular test? Is it a regularly scheduled or a special test situation?

To the extent possible, test administrators should:

Prepare…	Why Important…
Room Arrangement	To ensure that the room is large enough to accommodate all competitors comfortably with adequate light and ventilation and that the noise level will be such that competitors will not be distracted. Seating arrangements are such that all competitors will be able to see any instructions written on a blackboard such as time the test will end, etc. To ensure that a clock is in the room.
Scheduling of test	To ensure that there is no conflict with other scheduled tests or with other functions- the test must not be interrupted. Monitors know they are to be in the examination room in advance of the scheduled time. A minimum of 30 minutes is recommended; for some situations where more specific advance preparations are required, more time will be needed.

Prepare…	Why Important…
Test monitors	Arrangements should be made for the proper number of test monitors. There should be one test monitor for every 30 competitors. The ratio of test administrators/monitors should be as follows: Competitors Test Administrators Monitors 1 - 30 1 0 31 - 60 1 1 61 - 90 1 2 91 – 120 1 3 Since only OPM trained test administrators may conduct tests, it is advisable to have an alternate, OPM trained test administrator, available in the event the scheduled test administrator is unable to conduct the test as planned.
Order test materials	The Test administrator should be certain that they have the correct tests and related materials, including the Directions for Conducting the Test (DFC), # 2 pencils, a timer (or stopwatch), a "Testing--Do Not Disturb" sign, and other supplies (scratch paper, etc.) as required by the DFC. Test administrators should count the number of test booklets at least twice to verify that they have received the correct number.
Study directions for conducting test	The Test Administrator should study the Directions for Conducting the Test (DFC) carefully before the examination. He/she should familiarize themselves with: • The general make-up of the test; • Time limits involved; • Special directions; • Method of indicating answers; • Any sample questions (if they are to be answered in the test room); and • Any changes to the instructions in the DFC. These instructions will be provided by the appropriate OPM Service Center.
Review with monitors how materials are to be handled	The Test Administrators should review with the monitors the order in which materials are to be handed out and collected. He/she should also discuss how doors of the room are to be covered during entrance by competitors before the test and exit following the test. (**Note:** Advance preparation can help preclude potential for compromise of test material by competitors leaving through unattended doors, taking test material with them - one of the more common reasons for reported test material losses).

Guarding against fraud and cheating

These steps can help reduce fraud or cheating in the test room:

- Physical seating arrangements and proper stationing of monitors are essential for the proper administration of a test;
- Careful adherence to the DFC, accurate timing and guarding against disturbing interruptions, all contribute to suitable test environment;
- Monitors should always be on alert to detect wrongdoing. Monitors should be stationed at the side or rear of the test room. Test administrators and monitors must never be occupied in reading or other distracting activities. Any observations of apparent cheating should be recorded immediately. Do not wait until the test is over. Notify your local OPM Services Branch immediately after the test of any instances of cheating, fraud or test compromise/loss.
- Alertness in the test room should be tempered with a positive, helpful attitude. While the test must be carried out in a thorough and fair manner, test administrators should not become so extreme as to give the appearance that they trust no one.

Guarding against competitor impersonation in the test room

Impersonation can result in debarment of a competitor from Federal employment.

Methods of detecting possible impersonation:

- Comparing date of birth with obvious age, sex, name or known personal identity; and
- Observing a competitor's behavior will help in detecting possible impersonation.

Persons suspected of impersonation should be requested to sign in a second time. If the competitor refuses to cooperate, the test administrator should allow the competitor to take the examination. Test administrators should not outwardly accuse any competitor of impersonation. Any discussion with persons suspected of impersonation should be carried on without disturbing other competitors.

After the test session, the test administrator should collect the competitor's test material and keep it separate from other competitors' answer booklets. The test administrator must attach a full detailed report to the test papers of any competitor suspected of impersonation and send them to your local OPM Services Branch.

When fraud or cheating occurs

When fraud or cheating occurs:

- Your local OPM Service Center will review reports of cheating or fraud submitted by test administrators and send copies of the report to the OPM Test Security Officer;

- In all cases, an investigation of the incident must be conducted by your test control officer. If the test administrator suspects cheating or fraud has occurred, void the examination, even if the investigation is inconclusive;
- OPM will then notify the competitor that his/her test is canceled and the reason for such cancellation. The competitor will be notified that he/she may continue to participate in future tests, but he/she should be cautioned about his/her future conduct in the test room; and
- If the results of the investigation definitely establish the existence of cheating or fraud, the OPM Test Security Officer will prescribe additional action.

Instructions for conducting the test

These instructions should be followed when conducting the test:

Step	Action
1	A "Testing--Do Not Disturb" sign must be posted outside the room's primary entrance.
2	- Test administrators will collect admission notices or complete other registration procedures. - All competitors must sign and print their names on a sign-in roster, as well as present a picture ID before admission to the test room.
3	Desks should be cleared of all personal items.
4	- Sufficient test booklets, answer sheets, pencils, and scratch paper should be on hand. - Test booklets must be counted (at least twice) before being distributed to competitors.
5	- Materials should be distributed according to predetermined order. To avoid test security problems, the test administrator and/or monitor should hand distribute test material personally to each individual competitor. - After the tests are distributed, a check should be made to ensure that each person has a test. If there is a discrepancy, the test administrator must stop and immediately resolve it; the test cannot proceed until this has been accomplished. - After test booklets have been distributed to the competitors, the number of remaining test booklets must be counted. If multiple versions of a test are to be used, an equal number of all versions should be distributed by being passed out alternately.
6	Competitors are to be cautioned not to begin until told to do so.
7	- No competitors will be permitted to leave the room until they have turned in all test materials including scratch paper. - Procedures of collection should be briefly outlined, assuring that materials are received individually from all competitors.
8	- All identifying information is to be written on the answer sheet only. - Competitors must be instructed that they **do not** write any information on the test booklets (OPM reuses test material).

Step	Action
9	• Instructions should be given as directed. Included in each test package is a booklet containing the DFC • The DFC should be studied before the test begins. • The directions are to be read exactly as shown – test administrators must not improvise. Just as poor physical conditions may affect the performance of some competitors, so will a test administrator who stumbles through the reading of the directions.
10	It is important for test administrators to remember that many competitors have not tested before and are not familiar with the forms or what is expected of them. Test administrators may find the following points helpful: • A copy of the form should be shown to the competitors or clearly described to them as the directions for completing it are being read. • Competitors should always be given enough time to fully answer all preliminary questions on the forms and answer sheets. • If the directions are printed on the form or booklet, competitors should be instructed to read along silently.
11	• The test room should be scanned regularly to check for signs of competitors with puzzled looks or lack of understanding. • Competitors should frequently be asked if they have any questions. • Questions are to be encouraged and answers given which are short and easily understood. • Answers should be repeated as many times as necessary for complete understanding. • Answers should be given in a manner that makes the competitors feel that their question is justified, even if it seems simple to the test administrator. • Directions should be read in a warm, friendly, well-modulated voice.
12	If practice questions are to be answered in the test room, the test administrator should circulate among the competitors to make certain that each competitor understands the directions.
13	• The signal to begin should be given in a matter-of-fact way. • The words of the DFC must be used exactly; a test administrator must not trust his/her memory. Substitution of a word - even one with the same literal meaning - may alter the tone of the direction. • A test administrator should not insert exclamation marks in the reading. When the DFC says "READY, BEGIN the test," the test administrator should not read "READY, BEGIN!" This may stimulate speed and nervousness. Rather, the test administrator should say, "Ready," then glance around the room to be sure all competitors have pencils and materials in order. The words, "Begin the test," should be delivered clearly, but not so sharply as to suggest a violent push.

Step	Action
14	Test administrators should move quietly about the test room and, if necessary, make suggestions to individuals to make sure that: • Competitors are marking answers in the proper manner; for example, applying appropriate pressure, within the lines on the proper section of the answer sheet. • Competitors are continuing to go on to the next page of each section after finishing the previous page. • Competitors stop at the end of each section as required. • There is no copying from other competitors or other unfair practices. No outside interruptions will be permitted; this includes distracting activity by test administrators or monitors such as unnecessary conversation, reading newspapers, or receiving telephone calls during the test. Monitors should be stationed at the side or rear of the test room, and must always be on the alert to detect wrongdoing. Any observations of apparent cheating should be recorded immediately.
15	• Time limits must be observed precisely. • Those competitors still working when time is called must be instructed to stop immediately. • If competitors finish ahead of time, the test administrator may decide whether the papers may be turned in when finished, or whether they must wait until the group has finished. The test administrator should normally cover this before the test starts by telling the group what the "ground rules" are.
16	• Normally, no one will be released during the last ten minutes of the test so that no last minute confusion poses a test security problem. • Early departures should not be permitted when there is any question on accounting for all test material. • If anyone abandons his or her test, the answer sheet should be noted in pencil at the top "ABANDONED." The answer sheet should be put on the top of the stack for processing.

Giving examinations to persons with disabilities

It is OPM's policy to offer individuals with disabilities equal consideration for any job for which they can perform all duties efficiently and safely. In line with this policy, OPM arranges special examinations to ensure that the severely disabled have a fair chance to demonstrate their abilities.

You should be familiar with the most common of these special arrangements:

- An interpreter for the deaf;
- Larger print test booklets for the partially sighted;
- Readers for the test, tapes, and Braille for the blind;

- Enlarged answer sheets and/or test administrator assistance in marking answers for persons with motor-coordination disabilities.

The specific modified testing *procedures* will depend upon the individual competitor's disability. While method of administration can be modified for persons with disabilities, **do not** attempt to modify any examination.

You should contact your local OPM Service Center to discuss specific areas, as well as refer to OPM's "Guide for Administering Written Employment Examinations to Persons with Disabilities."

Disposition of materials

- Materials, including scratch paper, are collected, according to predetermined order. Any missing material must be obtained from the competitors(s) if possible. If necessary, competitors MUST be confronted with the fact that their test booklets are missing (5 CFR 300).
- Used and unused booklets and answer sheets are counted (at least twice), and the tally is recorded on the OPM 1291. Competitors are not to be dismissed from the test room until all test booklets are accounted for.
- A record should be made of any incidents observed that may tend to invalidate competitors' scores on the OPM 697 in the remark section. (Attachment 7).
- Competitors may not be allowed to wait in the test room for friends, test results, or for any other reason, after they have completed the test and turned in their test material.

Answer sheets

After competitors are dismissed answer sheets should be carefully checked to verify that the test identification data (name, social security number, test number, test series, and test part) are properly entered and coded.

Typically, answer sheets should be packaged and sent (via Federal Express) to your local OPM Service Center. The package should include:

- An identification of the test administered; and
- Instructions for providing test results to the agency.

Processing answer sheets

The local OPM Service Center will batch and send the answer sheets to OPM's Macon Technology Support Center for scoring. When the scores are received in the OPM Service Center from Macon, they will be forwarded to you. The answer sheets will be maintained in Macon.

FOIA requests for answer sheets

If you receive a request to review OPM test materials (including answer sheets) under the Freedom of Information Act, the Privacy Act, or as part of a court request, you should contact your local OPM Service Center for appropriate instructions. In those cases where you have assumed responsibility for the scanning and scoring of the answer sheets, your local OPM Service Center will provide separate instructions.

Performance tests

If you provide performance tests, you may obtain rating instructions from your local OPM Service Center when needed.

Test Security Procedures

Test security procedures

The security of the OPM test material is the personal responsibility of each individual authorized to conduct tests. The test administrator should use every possible means to safeguard confidential test materials. The primary security precautions should be that:

- All tests and test papers not required for the test being administered are locked in a secure place.
- Only OPM authorized test administrators or test control officers are allowed in the test room with the competitors.
- Each competitor receives the specified set of papers--no more and no less.
- Proper tests have been distributed—this is especially important when more than one basic test is to be administered (e.g., Tests 800 and 801A).
- Every paper sent in the test package is accounted for after the test.
- Only competitors and authorized test administrators see the test materials.
- Competitors do not take or pass notes or communicate with one another during the actual test.
- OPM is notified <u>immediately</u> in the event discrepancies are found.
- Agency mailroom personnel are informed to expect test material, and that they are not to open it.

Most test room security requirements can be met in an unobtrusive manner. Counting materials as they are given out and as they are collected is natural; so is banning interruptions. By treating these security measures as a matter of course, test administrators can safeguard test materials without projecting a hostile, suspicious attitude. Any additional security measures specified in the DFC for a particular examination should be carried out with the same alert but matter-of-fact approach.

Test security procedures under emergency conditions

If, during the administration of a test, it is necessary to evacuate a building, the following guidelines should be followed:

- Give primary consideration to the competitors' physical safety.
- During emergency exercises, first give primary consideration to the competitors and then secure the test material. If a practice alert is short in duration, the test administrator can resume testing at the point where it was discontinued.
- In any emergency that requires competitors to leave the test room, the test administrator should, if time permits, instruct the competitors to leave all test material on their desks. The test administrator will lock the test room, or, if this is not possible, collect the test material before departing.

- If the emergency is a bomb threat or actual fire, evacuate the test room as quickly as possible. Do not remove the test material if doing so will delay the evacuation. Safety of the competitors and test administrators is the prime consideration.

If a test is canceled due to an emergency situation, competitors should be rescheduled and instructed to report on a subsequent test date within a period of two to four weeks. A different series of the test material should be used for the rescheduled test. If the test administrator has test material and test space available in a nearby building, he/she may begin the test again at that location, using new test material.

Test loss

If, during the administration of the test, test material is found to be missing (e.g., an applicant runs out of the room with the test booklet), the test administrators should record the circumstances and details surrounding the loss/compromise of test material (include a seating chart, if appropriate). Test administrators should not undertake any physical action to obtain the missing test material. A full report of any incident should be included with the competitor's test papers whether the missing material is secured or not.

Competitors should be asked whether they still have any test material in their possession, and should be reminded that failure to turn in all test material before leaving the test room may result in cancellation of their test papers and denial of future testing, in addition to facing possible Federal prosecution.

If the test administrator observes a competitor withholding test material or strongly suspects a specific competitor of having withheld test material, the test administrator should not confront the competitor in the presence of other competitors, but request the competitor remain when other competitors are allowed to leave the test room. Remind the individual that his/her papers may be canceled and he/she cannot take future tests if he/she has withheld test material. In addition, inform him/her that they may be subject to prosecution for theft against the U.S. Government.

When the loss of test material is discovered after competitors have left the test room, the test administrator should not attempt to contact competitors, but should report details to OPM immediately. Before leaving the test room, the test administrator should make a thorough search of the area, including all trash cans, restrooms, and hallways.

Reporting a test loss/compromise

- Whenever test material is lost or missing, the test administrator will notify the agency test control officer at the end of the business day, and will follow-up by submitting a written incident report within 24 hours of the incident.
- The test control officer will notify your local OPM Service Center by telephone within 24 hours of the initial notification, to be followed by a written report within one week of the incident.

The report must include (5 CFR 300):

- Date, time, and location where incident occurred;
- Name of the test administrator in charge;
- A description of the test material, the test and series number, test book number (when applicable) and the number of copies missing;
- An explanation of the circumstances involved, and actions taken by the test administrator (include any involvement by other participants such as monitors, teachers, and competitors);
- Steps taken to recover the material;
- How the material became lost and recommendation for an investigation, if appropriate;
- Analysis of the incident (why loss/compromise occurred, procedures the test administrator failed to follow, etc); and
- Steps taken to prevent a recurrence of the incident.

SAMPLE TEST SECURITY AGREEMENT

(For all Test Materials Received from the US Office of Personnel Management)

1. Purpose of Agreement

This agreement intends to protect the mutual interests of the United States Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and the Federal agency using OPM developed test materials. It also protects the interests of persons who take such tests, in order that no person may gain special advantage by having improper access to the material. For purposes of this agreement, test materials include written tests, rating schedules, proficiency skill tests and scoring keys for each examining assessment whether it is in an automated (electronic) or manual (paper copy) format.

2. Terms and Conditions

Under this agreement, the signer accepts, personally and on behalf of the <**AGENCY**>, responsibility for carrying out its terms and conditions. The signer further agrees that all necessary administrative steps will be taken to assure that persons who have access to OPM test materials will be informed of this agreement and will be required to comply with it. Specifically, it is agreed that:

  a. Test materials obtained from OPM will be used only for the official purposes of the <**AGENCY**> in testing or rating candidates for employment and/or promotion. Under no circumstances will test materials be made available for purposes of study, copying, or publication. Despite agency regulations or union agreements, the <**AGENCY**> shall not permit any person who has taken a written test or was rated to review his/her answer sheet /Supplemental Qualification Statement (SQS) along with the test booklet/rating schedule. Individuals that took a test or were rated prior to this agreement may <u>not</u> come back to study their answer sheets and test booklets.

  b. Any agency research efforts for which OPM test materials will be used must be cleared by the Personnel Resources and Development Center, Employment Service Division, through the servicing OPM Service Center.

  c. The OPM test materials in the possession of the <**AGENCY**> must be handled and stored in a manner that prevents unauthorized persons from having access to them and in compliance with Chapter 300.201 of Title 5 Code of Federal Regulations and any other guidance provided the <**AGENCY**>.

  d. No official, staff member, consultant, or other employee of the <**AGENCY**> will loan, give, sell, or otherwise make available OPM test material to any other agency or unauthorized person, nor knowingly permit others to do so, without written permission of OPM's Office of Employment Policy.

  e. The agency headquarters' Test Security and Control Officer designated the signer of this agreement. The signer serves as the agency's Test Security and Control Officer (TSCO) at the designated site where the test materials are located. The local TSCO is responsible for the control and/or use of test materials.

  f. The agency headquarters' TSCO must be notified when the signer to this agreement vacates his/her position. In turn, the agency headquarters' TSCO must notify OPM's Office of

  Employment Policy of a replacement. If a replacement is not identified, OPM must request the return of the OPM materials. Additional test materials will not be issued to the agency

until a successor has been approved by OPM. The new successor must submit an OPM Form 1660-B to the servicing OPM Service Center for test security training.

g. OPM reserves the right to terminate this agreement, or to withhold access to its test materials, if it has reason to believe that the terms of the agreement are not being fulfilled. OPM also reserves the right to withdraw any or all of its test material at any time.

h. If any OPM test materials become involved in a legal proceeding conducted by a court or others vested with legal authority, the <**AGENCY**> must promptly inform the OPM's Office of the General Counsel, through the servicing OPM Service Center. The agency must request that the OPM test materials be covered by a protective order that safeguards their confidentiality.

On behalf of <**AGENCY**>, I accept the responsibility of serving as a Test Security Control Officer for this site. I agree to comply with the terms and conditions of this agreement:

Test Security and Control Officer

_____   _____
(Signature)   (Date)

Please Type:

Name: _____

Title: _____

Agency: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

_____

OPM Responsible Authority for this Agreement:

_____   _____
(Signature)   (Date)

Please Type:

Name: _____

Title: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Appendix F - Multipurpose Occupational Systems Analysis Inventory - Close-Ended (MOSAIC) Competencies

Background

OPM has been conducting Governmentwide occupational studies using its *Multipurpose Occupational Systems Analysis Inventory - Close-Ended* (MOSAIC) methodology for more than 10 years. MOSAIC, a multipurpose, survey-based occupational analysis approach, is used to collect information from incumbents and supervisors on many occupations for a wide range of human resource management functions.

A key component of the MOSAIC approach is an extensive literature review of relevant organizational and psychological literature and occupational information (for example, job analyses, position descriptions, classification standards, training plans, crediting plans, competency models) from public and private sector organizations.

Through these studies, we have identified the critical competencies and tasks employees need to perform successfully in nearly 200 Federal occupations, as well as for leadership positions.

The foundation of the MOSAIC approach is the common language, (that is, common tasks and competencies) used to describe all occupations included the study. This approach allows for comparisons both within and across occupations, which is particularly important for restructuring, broadbanding and career transitioning. Furthermore, it provides agencies with a basis for building integrated human resource management systems that use a common set of tasks and competencies to structure job design, recruitment, selection, performance management, training, and career development so that employees receive a consistent message about the factors on which they are selected, trained, and evaluated.

In this appendix

This appendix lists covered occupations and competencies for the following MOSAIC studies:

- Professional and Administrative Study, 1996-1997
- Clerical/Technical Study, 1993-1994
- Leadership Effectiveness Study, 1992
- Leadership Update Study, 1998
- Information Technology Study, 2000-2001
- Trades and Labor Occupational Study (TLOS), 2000-2002
- Science and Engineering Occupational Study, 2000-2002

The clerical/technical study and the two leadership studies did not distinguish between general and technical competencies. A list of occupations is not provided for the two leadership studies since leadership positions span every occupation.

Professional/Administrative Study Occupations

Series	Occupation
GS-0011	Bond Sales Promotion
GS-0018	Safety and Occupational Health Management
GS-0020	Community Planning
GS-0023	Outdoor Recreation Planning
GS-0025	Park Ranger
GS-0028	Environmental Protection Specialist
GS-0080	Security Administration
GS-0101	Social Science
GS-0105	Social Insurance Administration
GS-0106	Unemployment Insurance
GS-0110	Economist
GS-0130	Foreign Affairs
GS-0132	Intelligence
GS-0142	Manpower Development
GS-0150	Geography
GS-0170	History
GS-0180	Psychology
GS-0184	Sociology
GS-0187	Social Services
GS-0190	General Anthropology
GS-0193	Archaeology
GS-0201	Personnel Management
GS-0205	Military Personnel Management
GS-0212	Personnel Staffing
GS-0221	Position Classification
GS-0222	Occupational Analysis
GS-0223	Salary and Wage Administration
GS-0230	Employee Relations
GS-0233	Labor Relations
GS-0235	Employee Development
GS-0244	Labor Management Relations Examining
GS-0246	Contractor Industrial Relations
GS-0249	Wage and Hour Compliance
GS-0270	Civil Service Retirement
GS-0301	Miscellaneous Administration and Programs
GS-0334	Computer Specialist (Trainee)
GS-0341	Administrative Officer
GS-0343	Management Program Analysis
GS-0346	Logistics Management
GS-0360	Equal Opportunity Specialist
GS-0391	Telecommunications
GS-0501	Financial Administration and Programs
GS-0510	Accountant
GS-0511	Auditor
GS-0560	Budget Analysis
GS-0570	Financial Institution Examining
GS-0685	Public Health Program Specialist

Series	Occupation
GS-0801	General Engineer
GS-0905	General Attorney
GS-0950	Paralegal Specialist
GS-0962	Contact Representative
GS-0965	Land Law Examining
GS-0987	Tax Law Specialist
GS-0990	General Claims Examining
GS-0991	Worker's Compensation Claims Examining
GS-0993	Railroad Retirement Claims Examining
GS-0996	Veterans Claims Examining
GS-1001	General Arts and Information
GS-1015	Museum Curator
GS-1035	Public Affairs
GS-1082	Writing and Editing
GS-1083	Technical Writing and Editing
GS-1101	General Business and Industry
GS-1102	Contract Specialist
GS-1103	Industrial Property Management
GS-1104	Property Disposal
GS-1130	Public Utilities Specialist
GS-1140	Trade Specialist
GS-1145	Agricultural Program Specialist
GS-1146	Agricultural Marketing
GS-1147	Agricultural Market Reporting
GS-1150	Industrial Specialist
GS-1160	Financial Analysis
GS-1163	Insurance Examining
GS-1165	Loan Specialist
GS-1170	Realty
GS-1171	Appraising and Assessing
GS-1173	Housing Management
GS-1176	Building Management
GS-1301	Physical Scientist
GS-1412	Technical Information Services
GS-1420	Archivist
GS-1421	Archives Specialist
GS-1530	Statistician
GS-1701	General Education and Training
GS-1715	Vocational Rehabilitation
GS-1720	Education Program
GS-1801	Civil Aviation Security Specialist
GS-1810	General Investigator
GS-1811	Criminal Investigator
GS-1812	Game Law Enforcement
GS-1816	Immigration Inspection
GS-1831	Securities Compliance Examining
GS-1910	Quality Assurance Specialist
GS-2001	General Supply
GS-2003	Supply Program Management
GS-2010	Inventory Management
GS-2030	Distribution Facilities and Storage Management

Series	Occupation
GS-2032	Packaging
GS-2050	Supply Cataloging
GS-2101	Transportation Specialist
GS-2110	Transportation Industry Analysis
GS-2125	Highway Safety Management
GS-2130	Traffic Management
GS-2150	Transportation Operations

MOSAIC Competencies: Professional & Administrative Occupations 1996-1997

General Competencies

Competency	Description
Agility	Bends, stretches, twists, or reaches out with the body, arms, or legs.
Arithmetic	Performs computations such as addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division correctly using whole numbers, fractions, decimals, and percentages.
Attention to Detail	Is thorough when performing work and conscientious about attending to detail.
Conflict Management	Manages and resolves conflicts, grievances, confrontations, or disagreements in a constructive manner to minimize negative personal impact.
Creative Thinking	Uses imagination to develop new insights into situations and applies innovative solutions to problems; designs new methods where established methods and procedures are inapplicable or are unavailable.
Customer Service	Works with clients and customers (that is, any individuals who use or receive the services or products that your work unit produces, including the general public, individuals who work in the agency, other agencies, or organizations outside the Government) to assess their needs, provide information or assistance, resolve their problems, or satisfy their expectations; knows about available products and services; is committed to providing quality products and services.
Decision Making	Makes sound, well-informed, and objective decisions; perceives the impact and implications of decisions; commits to action, even in uncertain situations, to accomplish organizational goals; causes change.
Depth Perception	Accurately judges which of several objects is closer or farther away from the observer, or the distance between an object and the observer.
External Awareness	Identifies and understands economic, political, and social trends that affect the organization.
Eye-Hand Coordination	Accurately coordinates one's eyes with one's fingers, wrists, or arms to perform job-related tasks (for example, to move, carry, or manipulate objects).
Financial Management	Prepares, justifies, and/or administers the budget for program areas; plans, administers, and monitors expenditures to ensure cost-effective support of programs and policies; assesses financial condition of an organization.
Flexibility	Is open to change and new information; adapts behavior or work methods in response to new information, changing conditions, or unexpected obstacles; effectively deals with ambiguity.
Influencing/Negotiating	Persuades others to accept recommendations, cooperate, or change their behavior; works with others towards an agreement; negotiates to find mutually acceptable solutions.
Information Management	Identifies a need for and knows where or how to gather information; organizes and maintains information or information management systems.
Integrity/Honesty	Contributes to maintaining the integrity of the organization; displays high standards of ethical conduct and understands the impact of violating these standards on an organization, self, and others; is trustworthy.
Interpersonal Skills	Shows understanding, friendliness, courtesy, tact, empathy, concern, and politeness to others; develops and maintains effective relationships with others; may include effectively dealing with individuals who are difficult, hostile, or distressed; relates well to people from varied backgrounds and different situations; is sensitive to cultural diversity, race, gender, disabilities, and other individual differences.
Leadership	Influences, motivates, and challenges others; adapts leadership styles to a variety of situations.
Learning	Uses efficient learning techniques to acquire and apply new knowledge and skills; uses training, feedback, or other opportunities for self-learning and development.
Managing Human Resources	Plans, distributes, coordinates, and monitors work assignments of others; evaluates work performance and provides feedback to others on their performance; ensures that staff are appropriately selected, utilized, and developed, and that they are treated in a fair and equitable manner.
Mathematical Reasoning	Solves practical problems by choosing appropriately from a variety of mathematical and statistical techniques.
Memory	Recalls information that has been presented previously.
Mental Visualization	Sees things in the mind by mentally organizing and processing symbols, pictures, graphs, objects, or other information (for example, sees a building from a blueprint, or sees the flow of work activities from reading a work plan).

Competency	Description
Oral Communication	Expresses information (for example, ideas or facts) to individuals or groups effectively, taking into account the audience and nature of the information (for example, technical, sensitive, controversial); makes clear and convincing oral presentations; listens to others, attends to nonverbal cues, and responds appropriately.
Organizational Awareness	Knows the organization's mission and functions, and how its social, political, and technological systems work and operates effectively within them; this includes the programs, policies, procedures, rules, and regulations of the organization.
Perceptual Speed	Quickly and accurately sees detail in words, numbers, pictures, and graphs.
Peripheral Vision	Sees objects or movement of objects to one's side when the eyes are focused forward.
Physical Strength	Exerts maximum muscle force to lift, push, pull, or carry objects; performs moderately laboring work.
Planning and Evaluating	Organizes work, sets priorities, and determines resource requirements; determines short- or long-term goals and strategies to achieve them; coordinates with other organizations or parts of the organization to accomplish goals; monitors progress and evaluates outcomes.
Problem Solving	Identifies problems; determines accuracy and relevance of information; uses sound judgment to generate and evaluate alternatives, and to make recommendations.
Reading	Understands and interprets written material, including technical material, rules, regulations, instructions, reports, charts, graphs, or tables; applies what is learned from written material to specific situations.
Reasoning	Identifies rules, principles, or relationships that explain facts, data, or other information; analyzes information and makes correct inferences or draws accurate conclusions.
Self-Esteem	Believes in own self-worth; maintains a positive view of self and displays a professional image.
Self-Management	Sets well-defined and realistic personal goals; displays a high level of initiative, effort, and commitment towards completing assignments in a timely manner; works with minimal supervision; is motivated to achieve; demonstrates responsible behavior.
Spatial Orientation	Knows one's location in relation to the environment; determines where other objects are in relation to one's self (for example, when using a map).
Stamina	Exerts oneself physically over long periods of time without tiring (which may include performing repetitive tasks such as data entry or coding).
Stress Tolerance	Deals calmly and effectively with high stress situations (for example, tight deadlines, hostile individuals, emergency situations, dangerous situations).
Teaching Others	Helps others learn through formal or informal methods; identifies training needs; provides constructive feedback; coaches others on how to perform tasks; acts as a mentor.
Teamwork	Encourages and facilitates cooperation, pride, trust, and group identity; fosters commitment and team spirit; works with others to achieve goals.
Technical Competence	Uses knowledge that is acquired through formal training or extensive on-the-job experience to perform one's job; works with, understands, and evaluates technical information related to the job; advises others on technical issues.
Technology Application	Uses machines, tools, or equipment effectively; uses computers and computer applications to analyze and communicate information in the appropriate format.
Vision	Understands where the organization is headed and how to make a contribution; takes a long-term view and recognizes opportunities to help the organization accomplish its objectives or move toward the vision.
Visual Color Discrimination	Accurately matches or detects differences between colors, including shades of color and brightness.
Visual Identification	Accurately identifies people, animals, or objects based on knowledge of their characteristics.
Writing	Recognizes or uses correct English grammar, punctuation, and spelling; communicates information (for example, facts, ideas, or messages) in a succinct and organized manner; produces written information, which may include technical material that is appropriate for the intended audience.

Technical Competencies

Competency	Description
Administrative and Management	Knowledge of planning, coordination, and execution of business functions, resource allocation, and production.
Auditing	Knowledge of generally accepted auditing standards and procedures for conducting financial and compliance, economy and efficiency, and program results audits.
Biology	Knowledge of the environment, plant and animal living tissue, cells, organisms, and entities, including their functions, interdependencies and interactions with each other and the environment.
Building and Construction	Knowledge of materials, methods, and the appropriate tools to construct objects, structures, and buildings.
Chemistry	Knowledge of chemicals, including hazardous materials, and their uses, interactions, dangers, production, and disposal.
Clerical	Knowledge of filing, typing, entering data, maintaining records, taking shorthand, and using and completing forms.
Communication and Media	Knowledge of the production, communication and dissemination of information and ideas to inform and entertain via written, oral, and visual media.
Computers and Electronics	Knowledge of electric circuit boards, processors, chips, and computer hardware and software, including applications and programming.
Contracting/Procurement	Knowledge of various types of contracts, techniques for contracting or procurement, and contract negotiation and administration.
Design	Knowledge of developing, producing, understanding, and using plans, blueprints, models, and maps, including the use of tools and instruments to produce precision technical drawings.
Economics and Accounting	Knowledge of economic and accounting principles and practices, tax laws and practices, the financial markets, banking, and the analysis and reporting of financial data.
Education and Training	Knowledge of teaching, training, research, making presentations, lecturing, testing, and other instructional methods.
Engineering and Technology	Knowledge of engineering concepts, principles, and practices, and of equipment, tools, mechanical devices, and their uses to produce motion, light, power, technology, and other applications.
Fine Arts	Knowledge of theory and techniques required to produce, compose, and perform works of music, dance, visual arts, drama, and sculpture.
Food Production	Knowledge of planning, growing, and harvesting of food for consumption using appropriate equipment and techniques.
Foreign Language	Knowledge of sign language or of the structure and content of a foreign (non-English) language, including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition, and grammar.
Geography	Knowledge of geographical locations, their relationships and characteristics.
History and Archeology	Knowledge of historical events and their causes, indicators, and impact on particular civilization and cultures, and of preservation and archival techniques.
Insurance	Knowledge of various types of insurance, insurance regulations, claims processing, examination, adjudication, or adjustment.
Legal, Government and Jurisprudence	Knowledge of laws, legal codes, court procedures, precedents, legal practices and documents, Government regulations, executive orders, agency rules, Government organization and functions, and the democratic political process.
Mechanical	Knowledge of machines and tools, including their designs, uses, benefits, repair, and maintenance.
Medicine and Dentistry	Knowledge of the diagnosis and treatment of injuries, diseases, and deformities, including preventive health-care measures.
Personnel and Human Resources	Knowledge of hiring, classification, benefits, labor relations, negotiation, and Federal, state, and local employment regulations.

Competency	Description
Philosophy	Knowledge of different philosophical systems, including their basic principles, values, ethics, ways of thinking, customs, religions, and practices, and their impact on human culture.
Physics	Knowledge and prediction of physical principles, laws, and applications including air, water, material dynamics, light, atomic principles, heat, electric theory, earth formations, and meteorological and related natural phenomena.
Production and Processing	Knowledge of inputs, outputs, raw materials, waste, quality control, costs, maintaining inventory, and techniques for maximizing the manufacture and distribution of goods.
Psychology	Knowledge of human behavior and performance in various contexts, mental processes, or the assessment and treatment of behavioral and affective disorders.
Public Planning	Knowledge of functions, principles, practices, and techniques of public planning, including those related to community planning, outdoor recreation planning, and natural resource management, such as demand forecasting, environmental impact analysis, financial forecasting, and land use planning and zoning.
Public Safety and Security	Knowledge of the military, weaponry, and intelligence operations; public safety and security operations; occupational health and safety; investigation and inspection techniques; or rules, regulations, precautions, and prevention techniques for the protection of people, data, and property.
Real Estate	Knowledge of real estate principles, practices, markets, and values.
Sales and Marketing	Knowledge of showing promoting and selling products and services.
Sociology and Anthropology	Knowledge of group behavior and dynamics, societal trends and influences, cultures, their history, migrations, ethnicity, and origins.
Telecommunications	Knowledge of transmissions, broadcasting, switching, control, and operation of telecommunications systems.
Therapy and Counseling	Knowledge of diagnosis and treatment of physical and mental ailments, and career guidance.
Transportation	Knowledge of principles and methods for moving people or goods by air, rail, sea, or road, including costs and limits.

Clerical/Technical Study Occupations

Clerical

Series	Occupation
GS-0072	Fingerprint Identification
GS-0086	Security Clerical and Assistance
GS-0134	Intelligence Aid and Clerk
GS-0203	Personnel Clerical and Assistance
GS-0204	Military Personnel Clerical and Technician
GS-0302	Messenger
GS-0303	Miscellaneous Clerk and Assistant
GS-0304	Information Receptionist
GS-0305	Mail and File
GS-0309	Correspondence Clerk
GS-0312	Clerk-Stenographer and Reporter
GS-0313	Work Unit Supervising
GS-0318	Secretary
GS-0319	Closed Microphone Reporting
GS-0322	Clerk-Typist
GS-0326	Office Automation Clerical and Assistant
GS-0335	Computer Clerk and Assistant
GS-0344	Management Clerical and Assistance
GS-0350	Equipment Operator
GS-0351	Printing Clerical
GS-0356	Data Transcriber
GS-0357	Coding
GS-0382	Telephone Operating
GS-0394	Communications Clerical
GS-0503	Financial Clerical and Assistance
GS-0525	Accounting Technician
GS-0530	Cash Processing
GS-0540	Voucher Examining
GS-0544	Civilian Pay
GS-0545	Military Pay
GS-0561	Budget Clerical and Assistance
GS-0592	Tax Examining
GS-0679	Medical Clerk
GS-0963	Legal Instruments Examining
GS-0986	Legal Clerk and Technician
GS-0998	Claims Clerical
GS-1001	General Arts and Information
GS-1046	Language Clerical
GS-1087	Editorial Assistance
GS-1101	General Business and Industry
GS-1106	Procurement Clerical and Assistance
GS-1107	Property Disposal Clerical and Technician
GS-1421	Archives Technician
GS-1531	Statistical Assistant
GS-1802	Compliance Inspection and Support
GS-1897	Customs Aid*
GS-2001	General Supply

Series	Occupation
GS-2005	Supply Clerical and Technician
GS-2091	Sales Store Clerical
GS-2102	Transportation Clerk and Assistant
GS-2131	Freight Rate
GS-2132	Travel
GS-2134	Shipment Clerical and Assistance
GS-2151	Dispatching

Technical

Series	Occupation
GS-0019	Safety Technician*
GS-0029	Environmental Protection Assistant
GS-0119	Economic Assistant*
GS-0189	Recreation Aid and Assistant*
GS-0332	Computer Operations
GS-0361	Equal Opportunity
GS-0390	Telecommunications Processing
GS-0392	General Telecommunications
GS-0593	Insurance Accounts*
GS-0675	Medical Records Technician
GS-0962	Contact Representative
GS-0990	General Claims Examining
GS-0992	Loss and Damage Claims Examining*
GS-1016	Museum Specialist and Technician
GS-1105	Purchasing
GS-1152	Production Control
GS-1411	Library Technician
GS-1521	Mathematics Technician*
GS-1702	Education and Training Technician
GS-1862	Consumer Safety Inspection*
GS-1981	Agricultural Commodity Aid*
GS-2135	Transportation Loss and Damage Claims Examining
GS-2144	Cargo Scheduling*

*Data were not analyzed or reported for this occupation due to an insufficient number of respondents.

MOSAIC Competencies: Clerical/Technical Study - 1993-1994

Competency	Description
Applies Technology to Tasks	Selects and understands procedures, machines, or tools that will produce the desired results; identifies or solves problems in machines, computers, or other technologies as they are related to performing tasks.
Arithmetic/Mathematical Reasoning	Performs computations such as addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division correctly; solves practical problems by choosing appropriately from a variety of mathematical techniques such as formulas and percentages.
Conscientiousness	Displays a high level of effort and commitment towards performing work; demonstrates responsible behavior.
Creative Thinking	Uses imagination to combine ideas or information in new ways.
Customer Service	Works and communicates with clients and customers (e.g., any individuals who use or receive the services or products that your work unit provides, including individuals who work in your agency or in other agencies or organizations outside the Government) to satisfy their expectations. Committed to quality services.
Decision Making	Specifies goals and obstacles to achieving those goals, generates alternatives, considers risks, and evaluates and chooses the best alternative in order to make a determination, draw conclusions or solve a problem.
Eye-Hand Coordination	Accurately coordinates one's eyes with one's fingers, wrist, or arms to move, carry, or manipulate objects, or to perform other job-related tasks.
Flexibility	Adapts quickly to changes.
Integrity/Honesty	Displays high standards of ethical conduct and understands the impact of violating these standards on an organization, self, and others; chooses an ethical course of action; is trustworthy.
Interpersonal Skills	Shows understanding, friendliness, courtesy, tact, empathy, cooperation, concern, and politeness to others; relates well to different people from varied backgrounds and different situations.
Leadership	Interacts with others to influence, motivate, and challenge them.
Listening	Receives, attends to, interprets, and responds to verbal messages and other cues such as body language in ways that are appropriate to listeners and situations.
Manages and Organizes Information	Identifies a need; gathers, organizes, and maintains information; determines its importance and accuracy, and communicates it by a variety of methods.
Manages Human Resources	Plans, distributes, and monitors work assignments; evaluates work performance and provides feedback to others on their performance.
Manages Resources	Selects, acquires, stores, and distributes resources such as materials, equipment, or money.
Memory	Recalls information that has been presented previously.
Mental Visualization	Sees things in the mind by mentally organizing and processing symbols, pictures, graphs, objects, or other information. For example, sees a building from a blueprint, or sees the flow of work activities from reading a work plan.
Negotiation	Works with others towards an agreement that may involve exchanging specific resources or resolving differences.
Organizational Awareness	Knows how social, political, organizational, and technological systems work and operates effectively within them. This includes the policies, procedures, rules, and regulations of the work or organization.
Perceptual Speed	Sees detail in words, numbers, pictures, and graphs, quickly and accurately.
Physical Strength and Agility	Ability to bend, lift, climb, stand, and walk for long periods of time; ability to perform moderately heavy laboring work.
Reading	Learns from written material by determining the main idea or essential message. Recognizes correct English grammar, punctuation, and spelling.
Reasoning	Discovers or selects rules, principles, or relationships between facts and other information.
Self-Esteem	Believes in own self-worth, maintains a positive view of self, and displays a professional image.

Competency	Description
Self-Management	Sets well-defined and realistic personal goals; monitors progress and is motivated to achieve; manages own time and deals with stress effectively.
Speaking	Uses correct English grammar to organize and communicate ideas in words that are appropriate to listeners and situations; uses body language appropriately.
Stamina	Performs repetitive tasks effectively over a long period of time, for example, data entry and coding.
Teaches Others	Helps others learn; identifies training needs; provides constructive reinforcement; coaches others on how to perform tasks; acts as a mentor.
Teamwork	Encourages and facilitates cooperation, pride, trust, and group identity; fosters commitment and team spirit; works with others to achieve goals.
Technical Competence	Knowledge of how to perform one's job. Refers to specialized knowledge that is acquired through formal training or extensive on-the-job experience.
Writing	Uses correct English grammar, punctuation, and spelling to communicate thoughts, ideas, information, and messages in writing.

MOSAIC Competencies: Leadership Effectiveness Study – 1992

Competency	Description
Client Orientation	Anticipates and meets the needs of clients; achieves quality end-products; is committed to improving services.
Conflict Management	Manages and resolves conflicts, confrontations, and disagreements in a positive and constructive manner to minimize negative personal impact.
Creative Thinking	Develops new insights into situations and applies innovative solutions to make organizational improvements; designs and implements new or cutting-edge programs/processes.
Decisiveness	Makes sound and well-informed decisions; perceives the impact and implications of decisions; commits to action, even in uncertain situations, in order to accomplish organizational goals; causes change.
External Awareness	Identifies and keeps up-to-date on key agency policies/priorities and economic, political, and social trends which affect the organization; understands where the organization is headed and how to make a contribution.
Financial Management	Prepares, justifies, and/or administers the budget for program area; plans, administers and monitors expenditures to ensure cost-effective support of programs and policies.
Flexibility	Is open to change and new information; adapts behavior and work methods in response to new information, changing conditions, or unexpected obstacles; effectively deals with pressure and ambiguity.
Human Resources Management	Empowers people by sharing power and authority; develops lower levels of leadership by pushing authority downward and outward throughout the organization; shares rewards for achievement with employees; ensures that staff are appropriately selected, utilized, appraised, and developed, and that they are treated in a fair and equitable manner.
Influencing/Negotiating	Persuades others; develops networks and coalitions; gains cooperation from others to obtain information and accomplish goals; negotiates to find mutually acceptable solutions; build consensus through give and take.
Internal Controls/Integrity	Assures that effective internal controls are developed and maintained to ensure the integrity of the organization.
Interpersonal Skills	Considers and responds appropriately to the needs, feelings, and capabilities of others; adjusts approaches to suit different people and situations.
Leadership	Inspires, motivates and guides others toward goal accomplishment; coaches, mentors, and challenges subordinates; adapts leadership styles to a variety of situations; models high standards of honesty, integrity, trust, openness, and respect for the individual by applying these values to daily behaviors.
Managing Diverse Workforce	Is sensitive to cultural diversity, race, gender, and other individual differences in the workforce; manages workforce diversity.
Oral Communication	Expresses ideas and facts to individuals or groups effectively; makes clear and convincing oral presentations; listens to others; facilitates an open exchange of ideas.
Planning and Evaluating	Determines objectives and strategies; coordinates with other parts of the organization to accomplish goals; monitors and evaluates the progress and outcomes of operational plans; anticipates potential threats or opportunities.
Problem Solving	Identifies and analyzes problems; uses sound reasoning to arrive at conclusions; finds alternative solutions to complex problems; distinguishes between relevant and irrelevant information to make logical judgments.
Self-Direction	Demonstrates belief in own abilities and ideas; is self-motivated and results-oriented; recognizes own strengths and weaknesses; seeks feedback from others and opportunities for self-learning and development.
Team Building	Manages group processes; encourages and facilitates cooperation, pride, trust, and group identity; fosters commitment and team spirit; works with others to achieve goals.

Competency	Description
Technical Competence	Understands and appropriately applies procedures, requirements, regulations and policies related to specialized expertise, e.g., engineering, physical science, law, or accounting; maintains credibility with others on technical issues.
Technology Management	Integrates technology into the workplace; develops strategies using new technology to manage and improve program effectiveness; understands the impact of technological changes on the organization.
Vision	Takes a long-term view and initiates organizational change for the future; builds the vision with others; spots opportunities to move the organization toward the vision.
Written Communication	Expresses facts and ideas in writing in a succinct and organized manner.

MOSAIC Competencies: Leadership Update Study – 1998

Leading Change

Competency	Description
Continual Learning	Grasps the essence of new information; masters new technical and business knowledge; recognizes own strengths and weaknesses; pursues self-development; seeks feedback from others and opportunities to master new knowledge.
Creativity and Innovation	Develops new insights into situations and applies innovative solutions to make organizational improvements; creates a work environment that encourages creative thinking and innovation; designs and implements new or cutting-edge programs/processes.
External Awareness	Identifies and keeps up-to-date on key international policies and economic, political, and social trends that affect the organization. Understands near-term and long range plans and determines how to best be positioned to achieve a competitive business advantage in a global economy.
Flexibility	Is open to change and new information; adapts behavior and work methods in response to new information, changing conditions, or unexpected obstacles. Adjusts rapidly to new situations warranting attention and resolution.
Resilience	Deals effectively with pressure; maintains focus and intensity and remains optimistic and persistent, even under adversity. Recovers quickly from setbacks. Effectively balances personal life and work.
Service Motivation	Creates and sustains an organizational culture which permits others to provide the quality of service essential to high performance. Enables others to acquire the tools and support they need to perform well. Shows a commitment to public service. Influences others toward a spirit of service and meaningful contributions.
Strategic Thinking	Formulates effective strategies consistent with the business and competitive strategy of the organization in a global economy. Examines policy issues and strategic planning with a long term perspective. Determines objectives and sets priorities; anticipates potential threats or opportunities.
Vision	Takes a long-term view and acts as a catalyst for organizational change; builds a shared vision with others. Influences others to translate vision into action.

Leading People

Competency	Description
Conflict Management	Identifies and takes steps to prevent potential situations that could result in unpleasant confrontations. Manages and resolves conflicts, and disagreements in a positive and constructive manner to minimize negative impact.
Integrity/Honesty	Instills mutual trust and confidence; creates a culture that fosters high standards of ethics; behaves in a fair and ethical manner toward others, and demonstrates a sense of corporate responsibility and commitment to public service.
Leveraging Diversity	Recruits, develops, and retains a diverse high quality workforce in an equitable manner. Leads and manages an inclusive workplace that maximizes the talents of each person to achieve sound business results. Respects, understands, values and seeks out individual differences to achieve the vision and mission of the organization. Develops and uses measures and rewards to hold self and others accountable for achieving results that embody the principles of diversity.
Team Building	Inspires, motivates, and guides others toward goal accomplishments. Consistently develops and sustains cooperative working relationships. Encourages and facilitates cooperation within the organization and with customer groups; fosters commitment, team spirit, pride, trust. Develops leadership in others through coaching, mentoring, rewarding and guiding employees.

Building Coalitions/Communication

Competency	Description
Influencing/Negotiating	Persuades others; builds consensus through give and take; gains cooperation from others to obtain information and accomplish goals; facilitates "win-win" situations.
Interpersonal Skills	Considers and responds appropriately to the needs, feelings, and capabilities of different people in different situations; is tactful, compassionate and sensitive, and treats others with respect.
Oral Communication	Makes clear and convincing oral presentations to individuals or groups; listens effectively and clarifies information as needed; facilitates an open exchange of ideas and fosters atmosphere of open communication.
Partnering	Develops networks and builds alliances, engages in cross-functional activities; collaborates across boundaries, and finds common ground with a widening range of stakeholders. Utilizes contacts to build and strengthen internal support bases.
Political Savvy	Identifies the internal and external politics that impact the work of the organization. Approaches each problem situation with a clear perception of organizational and political reality, recognizes the impact of alternative courses of action.
Written Communication	Expresses facts and ideas in writing in a clear, convincing and organized manner.

Results Driven

Competency	Description
Accountability	Assures that effective controls are developed and maintained to ensure the integrity of the organization. Holds self and others accountable for rules and responsibilities. Can be relied upon to ensure that projects within areas of specific responsibility are completed in a timely manner and within budget. Monitors and evaluates plans, focuses on results and measuring attainment of outcomes.
Customer Service	Balancing interests of a variety of clients; readily readjusts priorities to respond to pressing and changing client demands. Anticipates and meets the need of clients; achieves quality end-products; is committed to continuous improvement of services.
Decisiveness	Exercises good judgment by making sound and well-informed decisions; perceives the impact and implications of decisions; makes effective and timely decisions, even when data are limited or solutions produce unpleasant consequences; is proactive and achievement oriented.
Entrepreneurship	Identifies opportunities to develop and market new products and services within or outside of the organization. Is willing to take risks; initiates actions that involve a deliberate risk to achieve a recognized benefit or advantage.
Problem Solving	Identifies and analyzes problems; distinguishes between relevant and irrelevant information to make logical decisions; provides solutions to individual and organizational problems.
Technical Credibility	Understands and appropriately applies procedures, requirements, regulations, and policies related to specialized expertise. Is able to make sound hiring and capital resource decisions and to address training and development needs. Understands linkages between administrative competencies and mission needs.

Business Acumen

Competency	Description
Financial Management	Demonstrates broad understanding of principles of financial management and marketing expertise necessary to ensure appropriate funding levels. Prepares, justifies, and/or administers the budget for the program area; uses cost-benefit thinking to set priorities; monitors expenditures in support of programs and policies. Identifies cost-effective approaches. Manages procurement and contracting.
Human Resources Management	Assesses current and future staffing needs based on organizational goals and budget realities. Using merit principles, ensures staff is appropriately selected, developed, utilized, appraised and rewarded; takes corrective action.
Technology Management	Uses efficient and cost-effective approaches to integrate technology into the workplace and improve program effectiveness. Develop strategies using new technology to enhance decision making. Understands the impact of technological change on the organization.

Information Technology Study Occupations and Specialty Titles

Occupations

Series	Occupations
GS-0334	Computer Specialist
GS-0391	Telecommunications
GS-0854	Computer Engineer
GS-1550	Computer Scientist

Specialty Titles

Title	Description
Customer Support	This specialty covers the planning and delivery of customer support services at the point of computer user/specialist interface, including installation, configuration, troubleshooting, user assistance, and/or training.
Data Management	This specialty covers the planning, development, implementation, and administration of systems for the acquisition, storage, and retrieval of data.
General	This covers positions not classifiable in any of the other specialties, for example, positions in new and emerging specialty areas.
Information Systems Security	This specialty ensures the integrity, availability, and confidentiality of information systems through the planning, analysis, development, implementation, maintenance, and enhancement of systems, programs, policies, procedures, and tools.
Internet	This specialty covers technical planning, design, development, testing, implementation, and management of Internet, Intranet, and extranet activities, including systems/applications development and technical management of web sites.
Network Services	This specialty covers the planning, analysis, design, development, testing, quality assurance, configuration, installation, implementation, integration, maintenance, and/or management of networked systems used for the transmission of information in voice, data, and/or video formats.
Policy, Planning, and Management	This specialty covers a wide range of activities that typically extend and apply to an entire organization or major components of an organization. This includes strategic planning, capital planning, workforce planning, policy and standards development, budgeting, resource management, knowledge management, information architecture management, infrastructure planning and modeling, investment analysis, auditing, and information security management.
Software Engineering, Applications	This specialty covers the design, development, modification, testing, installation, implementation, and support of new or existing applications software.
Software Engineering, Systems	This specialty covers the planning, installation, configuration, testing, implementation, and management of the systems environment.
Systems Administration	This specialty covers planning and coordination of the installation, testing, operations, troubleshooting, and maintenance of large-scale hardware and software systems.
Systems Analysis	This specialty covers the analysis of processes leading to the planning, design, and implementation of new and improved information systems to meet the requirements of the organization.

MOSAIC Competencies: Information Technology Study - 2000-2001

General Competencies

Competency	Description
Administration and Management	Knowledge of planning, coordination, and execution of business functions, resource allocation, and production.
Arithmetic	Performs computations such as addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division correctly using whole numbers, fractions, decimals, and percentages.
Attention to Detail	Is thorough when performing work and conscientious about attending to detail.
Computers and Electronics	Knowledge of electric circuit boards, processors, chips, and computer hardware and software, including applications and programming.
Conflict Management	Manages and resolves conflicts, grievances, confrontations, or disagreements in a constructive manner to minimize negative personal impact.
Contracting/Procurement	Knowledge of various types of contracts, techniques for contracting or procurement, and contract negotiation and administration.
Creative Thinking	Uses imagination to develop new insights into situations and applies innovative solutions to problems; designs new methods where established methods and procedures are inapplicable or are unavailable.
Customer Service	Works with clients and customers (that is, any individuals who use or receive the services or products that your work unit produces, including the general public, individuals who work in the agency, other agencies, or organizations outside the Government) to assess their needs, provide information or assistance, resolve their problems, or satisfy their expectations; knows about available products and services; is committed to providing quality products and services.
Decision Making	Makes sound, well-informed, and objective decisions; perceives the impact and implications of decisions; commits to action, even in uncertain situations, to accomplish organizational goals; causes change.
Economics and Accounting	Knowledge of economic and accounting principles and practices, tax law and practices, the financial markets, banking, and the analysis and reporting of financial data.
Education and Training	Knowledge of teaching, training, research, making presentations, lecturing, testing, and other instructional methods.
Engineering and Technology	Knowledge of engineering concepts, principles, and practices, and of equipment, tools, mechanical devices, and their uses to produce motion, light, power, technology, and other applications.
External Awareness	Identifies and understands economic, political, and social trends that affect the organization.
Financial Management	Prepares, justifies, and/or administers the budget for program areas; plans, administers, and monitors expenditures to ensure cost-effective support of programs and policies; assesses financial condition of an organization.
Flexibility	Is open to change and new information; adapts behavior or work methods in response to new information, changing conditions, or unexpected obstacles; effectively deals with ambiguity.
Information Management	Identifies a need for and knows where or how to gather information; organizes and maintains information or information management systems.
Influencing/Negotiating	Persuades others to accept recommendations, cooperate, or change their behavior; works with others towards an agreement; negotiates to find mutually acceptable solutions.
Integrity/Honesty	Contributes to maintaining the integrity of the organization; displays high standards of ethical conduct and understands the impact of violating these standards on an organization, self, and others; is trustworthy.

Competency	Description
Interpersonal Skills	Shows understanding, friendliness, courtesy, tact, empathy, concern, and politeness to others; develops and maintains effective relationships with others; may include effectively dealing with individuals who are difficult, hostile, or distressed; relates well to people from varied backgrounds and different situations; is sensitive to cultural diversity, race, gender, disabilities, and other individual differences.
Leadership	Influences, motivates, and challenges others; adapts leadership styles to a variety of situations.
Learning	Uses efficient learning techniques to acquire and apply new knowledge and skills; uses training, feedback, or other opportunities for self-learning and development.
Legal, Government and Jurisprudence	Knowledge of laws, legal codes, court procedures, precedents, legal practices and documents, Government regulations, executive orders, agency rules, Government organization and functions, and the democratic political process.
Managing Human Resources	Plans, distributes, coordinates, and monitors work assignments of others; evaluates work performance and provides feedback to others on their performance; ensures that staff are appropriately selected, utilized, and developed, and that they are treated in a fair and equitable manner.
Mathematical Reasoning	Solves practical problems by choosing appropriately from a variety of mathematical and statistical techniques.
Memory	Recalls information that has been presented previously.
Mental Visualization	Sees things in the mind by mentally organizing and processing symbols, pictures, graphs, objects, or other information (for example, sees a building from a blueprint, or sees the flow of work activities from reading a work plan).
Oral Communication	Expresses information (for example, ideas or facts) to individuals or groups effectively, taking into account the audience and nature of the information (for example, technical, sensitive, controversial); makes clear and convincing oral presentations; listens to others, attends to nonverbal cues, and responds appropriately.
Organizational Awareness	Knows the organization's mission and functions, and how its social, political, and technological systems work and operates effectively within them; this includes the programs, policies, procedures, rules, and regulations of the organization.
Perceptual Speed	Quickly and accurately sees detail in words, numbers, pictures, and graphs.
Planning and Evaluating	Organizes work, sets priorities, and determines resource requirements; determines short- or long-term goals and strategies to achieve them; coordinates with other organizations or parts of the organization to accomplish goals; monitors progress and evaluates outcomes.
Problem Solving	Identifies problems; determines accuracy and relevance of information; uses sound judgment to generate and evaluate alternatives, and to make recommendations.
Public Safety and Security	Knowledge of the military, weaponry, and intelligence operations; public safety and security operations; occupational health and safety; investigation and inspection techniques; or rules, regulations, precautions, and prevention techniques for the protection of people, data, and property.
Reading	Understands and interprets written material, including technical material, rules, regulations, instructions, reports, charts, graphs, or tables; applies what is learned from written material to specific situations.
Reasoning	Identifies rules, principles, or relationships that explain facts, data, or other information; analyzes information and makes correct inferences or draws accurate conclusions.
Self-Esteem	Believes in own self-worth; maintains a positive view of staff and displays a professional image.
Self-Management	Sets well-defined and realistic personal goals; displays a high level of initiative, effort, and commitment towards completing assignments in a timely manner; works with minimal supervision; is motivated to achieve; demonstrates responsible behavior.
Strategic Thinking	Formulates effective strategies consistent with the business and competitive strategy of the organization in a global economy. Examines policy issues and strategic planning with a long-term perspective. Determines objectives and sets priorities; anticipates potential threats or opportunities.

Competency	Description
Stress Tolerance	Deals calmly and effectively with high stress situations (for example, tight deadlines, hostile individuals, emergency situations, dangerous situations).
Teaching Others	Helps others learn through formal or informal methods; identifies training needs; provides constructive feedback; coaches others on how to perform tasks; acts as a mentor.
Teamwork	Encourages and facilitates cooperation, pride, trust, and group identity; fosters commitment and team spirit; works with others to achieve goals.
Technical Competence	Uses knowledge that is acquired through formal training or extensive on-the-job experience to perform one's job; works with, understands, and evaluates technical information related to the job; advises others on technical issues.
Technology Application	Uses machines, tools, or equipment effectively; uses computers and computer applications to analyze and communicate information in the appropriate format.
Vision	Understands where the organization is headed and how to make a contribution; takes a long-term view and recognizes opportunities to help the organization accomplish its objectives or move toward the vision.
Writing	Recognizes or uses correct English grammar, punctuation, and spelling; communicates information (for example, facts, ideas, or messages) in a succinct and organized manner; produces written information, which may include technical material, that is appropriate for the intended audience.

MOSAIC Competencies: Information Technology Study - 2000-2001

Technical Competencies

Competency	Description
Accessibility	Knowledge of tools, equipment, and technologies used to help individuals with disabilities use computer equipment and software.
Artificial Intelligence	Knowledge of the principles, methods, and tools used to design systems that perform human intelligence functions.
Business Process Reengineering	Knowledge of methods, metrics, tools, and techniques of Business Process Reengineering.
Capacity Management	Knowledge of the principles and methods for monitoring, estimating, or reporting actual performance or the performance capability of information systems or components.
Capital Planning and Investment Assessment	Knowledge of the principles and methods of capital investment analysis or business case analysis, including return on investment analysis.
Computer Languages	Knowledge of computer languages and their applications to enable a system to perform specific functions.
Computer Forensics	Knowledge of tools and techniques used in data recovery and preservation of electronic evidence.
Configuration Management	Knowledge of the principles and methods for planning or managing the implementation, update, or integration of information systems components.
Cost-Benefit Analysis	Knowledge of the principles and methods of cost-benefit analysis, including the time value of money, present value concepts, and quantifying tangible and intangible benefits.
Data Management	Knowledge of the principles, procedures, and tools of data management, such as modeling techniques, data backup, data recovery, data dictionaries, data warehousing, data mining, data disposal, and data standardization processes.
Database Administration	Knowledge of the principles, methods, and tools for automating, developing, implementing, or administering database systems.
Database Management Systems	Knowledge of the uses of database management systems and software to control the organization, storage, retrieval, security, and integrity of data.
Distributed Systems	Knowledge of the principles, theoretical concepts, and tools underlying distributed computing systems, including their associated components and communication standards.
Electronic Commerce (e-Commerce)	Knowledge of the principles, methods, and tools for conducting business online, including electronic data interchange.
Embedded Computers	Knowledge of specifications and uses of specialized computer systems used to control devices (for example, automobiles, helicopters), including the appropriate programming languages.
Encryption	Knowledge of procedures, tools, and applications used to keep data or information secure, including public key infrastructure, point-to-point encryption, and smart cards.
Hardware	Knowledge of specifications, uses, and types of computer or computer-related equipment.
Hardware Engineering	Knowledge of the principles, methods, and tools for designing, developing, and testing computer or computer-related equipment.
Human Factors	Knowledge of the principles, methods, and tools used to identify and apply information about human behavior, abilities, limitations, and other characteristics to the design of tools, machines, systems, tasks, jobs, and environments for effective human use.
Information Assurance	Knowledge of methods and procedures to protect information systems and data by ensuring their availability, authentication, confidentiality, and integrity.
Information Resources Strategy and Planning	Knowledge of the principles, methods, and techniques of information technology (IT) assessment, planning, management, monitoring, and evaluation, such as IT baseline assessment, interagency functional analysis, contingency planning, and disaster recovery.

Competency	Description
Information Systems Security Certification	Knowledge of the principles, methods, and tools for evaluating information systems security features against a set of specified security requirements. Includes developing security certification and accreditation plans and procedures, documenting deficiencies, reporting corrective actions, and recommending changes to improve the security of information systems.
Information Systems/Network Security	Knowledge of methods, tools, and procedures, including development of information security plans, to prevent information systems vulnerabilities, and provide or restore security of information systems and network services.
Information Technology Architecture	Knowledge of architectural methodologies used in the design and development of information systems, including the physical structure of a system's internal operations and interactions with other systems.
Information Technology Performance Assessment	Knowledge of the principles, methods, and tools (for example, surveys, system performance measures) to assess the effectiveness and practicality of information technology systems.
Information Technology Research and Development	Knowledge of scientific principles, methods, and tools of basic and applied research used to conduct a systematic inquiry into a subject matter area.
Infrastructure Design	Knowledge of the architecture and typology of software, hardware, and networks, including LANS, WANS, and telecommunications systems, their components and associated protocols and standards, and how they operate and integrate with one another and with associated controlling software.
Knowledge Management	Knowledge of the value of collected information and the methods of sharing that information throughout an organization.
Logical Systems Design	Knowledge of the principles and methods for designing business logic components, system processes and outputs, user interfaces, data inputs, and productivity tools (for example, CASE).
Modeling and Simulation	Knowledge of mathematical modeling and simulation tools and techniques to plan and conduct test and evaluation programs, characterize systems support decisions involving requirements, evaluate design alternatives, or support operational preparation.
Multimedia Technologies	Knowledge of the principles, methods, tools, and techniques of developing or applying technology using text, audio, graphics, or other media.
Network Management	Knowledge of the operation, management, and maintenance of network and telecommunication systems and linked systems and peripherals
Object Technology	Knowledge of the principles, methods, tools, and techniques that use object-oriented languages, analysis, and design methodologies.
Operating Systems	Knowledge of computer network, desktop, and mainframe operating systems and their applications.
Operations Support	Knowledge of procedures to ensure production or delivery of products and services, including tools and mechanisms for distributing new or enhanced software.
Organizational Development	Knowledge of the principles of organizational development and change management theories, and their applications.
Process Control	Knowledge of the principles, methods, and procedures used for the automated control of a process, including the design, development, and maintenance of associated software, hardware, and systems.
Product Evaluation	Knowledge of methods for researching and analyzing external products to determine their potential for meeting organizational standards and business needs.
Project Management	Knowledge of the principles, methods, or tools for developing, scheduling, coordinating, and managing projects and resources, including monitoring and inspecting costs, work, and contractor performance.
Quality Assurance	Knowledge of the principles, methods, and tools of quality assurance and quality control used to ensure a product fulfills functional requirements and standards.
Requirements Analysis	Knowledge of the principles and methods to identify, analyze, specify, design, and manage functional and infrastructure requirements; includes translating functional requirements into technical requirements used for logical design or presenting alternative technologies or approaches.
Risk Management	Knowledge of methods and tools used for risk assessment and mitigation of risk.

Competency	Description
Software Development	Knowledge of the principles, methods, and tools for designing, developing, and testing software in a given environment.
Software Engineering	Knowledge of software engineering design and development methodologies, paradigms, and tools; the software life cycle; software reusability; and software reliability metrics.
Software Testing and Evaluation	Knowledge of the principles, methods, and tools for analyzing and developing software test and evaluation procedures.
Standards	Knowledge of standards that either are compliant with or derived from established standards or guidelines.
Systems Integration	Knowledge of the principles, methods, and procedures for installing, integrating, and optimizing information systems components.
Systems Life Cycle	Knowledge of systems life cycle management concepts used to plan, develop, implement, operate, and maintain information systems
Systems Testing and Evaluation	Knowledge of the principles, methods, and tools for analyzing and developing systems test and evaluation procedures and technical characteristics of IT systems, including identifying critical operational issues.
Technical Documentation	Knowledge of procedures for developing technical and operational support documentation.
Technology Awareness	Knowledge of developments and new applications of information technology (hardware, software, telecommunications), emerging technologies and their applications to business processes, and applications and implementation of information systems to meet organizational requirements.
Telecommunications	Knowledge of transmissions, broadcasting, switching, control, and operation of telecommunications systems.
Web Technology	Knowledge of the principles and methods of web technologies, tools, and delivery systems, including web security, privacy policy practices, and user interface issues.

Trades And Labor Study Occupations

Series	Occupations
GS-5306	Air Conditioning Equipment Mechanic
GS-2892	Aircraft Electrician
GS-8602	Aircraft Engine Mechanic
GS-8852	Aircraft Mechanic
GS-8840	Aircraft Mechanical Parts Repairing
GS-6652	Aircraft Ordnance Systems Mechanic
GS-8268	Aircraft Pneudraulic Systems Mechanic
GS-5048	Animal Caretaking
GS-5823	Automotive Mechanic
GS-5402	Boiler Plant Operating
GS-3727	Buffing and Polishing
GS-4607	Carpentry
GS-3513	Coin/Currency Checking
GS-7404	Cooking
GS-5484	Counting Machine Operating
GS-5725	Crane Operating
GS-3566	Custodial Working
GS-2608	Digital Computer Mechanic
GS-2854	Electrical Equipment Repairing
GS-5407	Electric Power Controlling
GS-2805	Electrician
GS-2810	Electrician (High Voltage)
GS-2606	Electronic Industrial Controls Mechanic
GS-2610	Electronic Integrated Systems Mechanic
GS-2602	Electronic Measurement Equip Mechanic
GS-2604	Electronics Mechanic
GS-3711	Electroplating
GS-5716	Engineering Equipment Operating
GS-7009	Equipment Cleaning
GS-6502	Explosives Operating
GS-3105	Fabric Working
GS-7408	Food Service Working
GS-5704	Fork Lift Operating
GS-5413	Fuel Distribution Systems Operating
GS-5003	Gardening
GS-4737	General Equipment Mechanic
GS-3712	Heat Treating
GS-5309	Heating and Boiler Plant Equipment Mechanic
GS-5803	Heavy Mobile Equipment Mechanic
GS-5352	Industrial Equipment Mechanic
GS-3359	Instrument Mechanic
GS-3610	Insulating
GS-3502	Laboring

Series	Occupations
GS-7305	Laundry Machine Operating
GS-7304	Laundry Working
GS-5426	Lock and Dam Operating
GS-5318	Lock and Dam Repairing
GS-3431	Machine Tool Operating
GS-3414	Machining
GS-4749	Maintenance Machinery Mechanic
GS-5334	Marine Machinery Mechanic
GS-3603	Masonry
GS-6912	Materials Examining and Identifying
GS-6910	Materials Expediting
GS-6907	Materials Handler
GS-7407	Meatcutting
GS-3832	Medal Making
GS-3869	Metal Forming Machine Operating
GS-6501	Miscellaneous Ammunition, Explosives and Toxic Materials Operating
GS-7401	Miscellaneous Food Preparing and Serving
GS-4801	Miscellaneous General Equipment Maintenance
GS-4701	Miscellaneous General Maintenance & Operations
GS-5301	Miscellaneous Industrial Equipment Maintenance Mechanic
GS-5401	Miscellaneous Industrial Equipment Operating
GS-4201	Miscellaneous Plumbing and Pipefitting
GS-3701	Miscellaneous Metal Processing
GS-3801	Miscellaneous Metal Work
GS-3401	Miscellaneous Tool Working
GS-5801	Miscellaneous Transportation/Mobile Equipment Mechanic
GS-6901	Miscellaneous Warehousing and Stock Handling
GS-3809	Mobile Equipment Metal Mechanic
GS-5703	Motor Vehicle Operating
GS-6641	Ordnance Equipment Mechanic
GS-7002	Packing
GS-5440	Packaging Machine Operating
GS-4102	Painting
GS-5026	Pest Controlling
GS-4204	Pipefitting
GS-4206	Plumbing
GS-8255	Pneudraulic Systems Mechanic
GS-5378	Powered Support Equipment Mechanic
GS-5350	Production Machinery Mechanic
GS-5210	Rigging
GS-5706	Road Sweeper Operating
GS-3806	Sheet Metal Mechanic
GS-3820	Shipfitting
GS-5786	Small Craft Operating
GS-6914	Store Working
GS-3416	Toolmaking
GS-6904	Tools and Parts Attending

Series	Occupations
GS-5705	Tractor Operating
GS-3833	Transfer Engraving
GS-5406	Utility Systems Operating
GS-4742	Utility Systems Repairing-Operating
GS-5408	Wastewater Treatment Plant Operating
GS-5409	Water Treatment Plant Operating
GS-5424	Weighing Machine Operating
GS-3703	Welding
GS-4604	Wood Working

MOSAIC Competencies: Trades & Labor Occupational Study (TLOS) - 2000-2002

General Competencies

Competency	Description
Agility	Bends, stretches, twists, or reaches out with the body, arms, or legs.
Arithmetic	Performs computations such as addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division correctly using whole numbers, fractions, decimals, and percentages.
Attention To Detail	Is thorough when performing work and conscientious about attending to detail.
Conflict Management	Manages and resolves conflicts, grievances, confrontations, or disagreements in a constructive manner to minimize negative personal impact.
Creative Thinking	Uses imagination to develop new insights into situations and applies new solutions to problems; designs new methods where established methods and procedures are not suitable or are unavailable.
Customer Service	Works with clients and customers (that is, any individuals who use or receive the services or products that your work unit produces, including the general public, individuals who work in the agency, other agencies, or organizations outside the Government) to assess their needs, provide information or assistance, resolve their problems, or satisfy their expectations; knows about available products and services; is committed to providing quality products and services.
Decision Making	Makes sound, well-informed, and objective decisions; perceives the impact and implications of decisions; commits to action, even in uncertain situations, to accomplish organizational goals; causes change.
Depth Perception	Accurately judges which of several objects is closer or farther away from the observer, or the distance between an object and the observer.
External Awareness	Identifies and understands economic, political, and social trends that affect the organization.
Eye-Hand Coordination	Accurately coordinates one's eyes with one's fingers, wrists, or arms to perform job-related tasks (for example, to move, carry, or manipulate objects).
Financial Management	Prepares, justifies, and/or administers the budget for program areas; plans, administers, and monitors expenditures to ensure cost-effective support of programs and policies; assesses financial condition of an organization.
Flexibility	Is open to change and new information; adapts behavior or work methods in response to new information, changing conditions, or unexpected obstacles; effectively deals with uncertainty.
Information Management	Identifies a need for and knows where or how to gather information; organizes and maintains information or information management systems.
Influencing/Negotiating	Persuades others to accept recommendations, cooperate, or change their behavior; works with others towards an agreement; negotiates to find mutually acceptable solutions.
Integrity/Honesty	Contributes to maintaining the integrity of the organization; displays high standards of ethical conduct and understands the impact of violating these standards on an organization, self, and others; is trustworthy.
Interpersonal Skills	Shows understanding, friendliness, courtesy, tact, empathy, concern, and politeness to others; develops and maintains effective relationships with others; may include effectively dealing with individuals who are difficult, hostile, or distressed; relates well to people from varied backgrounds and different situations; is sensitive to cultural diversity, race, gender, disabilities, and other individual differences.
Leadership	Influences, motivates, and challenges others; adapts leadership styles to a variety of situations.
Learning	Uses efficient learning techniques to acquire and apply new knowledge and skills; uses training, feedback, or other opportunities for self-learning and development.
Managing Human Resources	Plans, distributes, coordinates, and monitors work assignments of others; evaluates work performance and provides feedback to others on their performance; ensures that staff are appropriately selected, utilized, and developed, and that they are treated in a fair and equitable manner.

Competency	Description
Mathematical Reasoning	Solves practical problems by choosing appropriately from a variety of mathematical and statistical techniques.
Mental Visualization	Sees things in the mind by mentally organizing and processing symbols, pictures, graphs, objects, or other information (for example, sees a building from a blueprint, or sees the flow of work activities from reading a work plan).
Memory	Recalls information that has been presented previously.
Oral Communication	Expresses information (for example, ideas or facts) to individuals or groups effectively, taking into account the audience and nature of the information (for example, technical, sensitive, controversial); makes clear and convincing oral presentations; listens to others, attends to nonverbal cues, and responds appropriately.
Organizational Awareness	Knows the organization's mission and functions, and how its social, political, and technological systems work and operates effectively within them; this includes the programs, policies, procedures, rules, and regulations of the organization.
Perceptual Speed	Quickly and accurately sees detail in words, numbers, pictures, and graphs.
Peripheral Vision	Sees objects or movement of objects to one's side when the eyes are focused forward.
Physical Strength	Exerts maximum muscle force to lift, push, pull, or carry objects; performs moderately laboring work.
Planning and Evaluating	Organizes work, sets priorities, and determines resource requirements; determines short- or long-term goals and strategies to achieve them; coordinates with other organizations or parts of the organization to accomplish goals; monitors progress and evaluates outcomes.
Problem Solving	Identifies problems; determines accuracy and relevance of information; uses sound judgment to generate and evaluate alternatives, and to make recommendations.
Reading	Understands and interprets written material, including technical materials, rules, regulations, instructions, reports, charts, graphs, or tables; applies what is learned from written material to specific situations.
Reasoning	Identifies rules, principles, or relationships that explain facts, data, or other information; analyzes information and makes correct inferences or draws accurate conclusions.
Self-Esteem	Believes in own self-worth; maintains a positive view of self and displays a confident, capable image.
Self-Management	Sets well-defined and realistic personal goals; displays a high level of initiative, effort, and commitment towards completing assignments in a timely manner; works with minimal supervision; is motivated to achieve; demonstrates responsible behavior.
Spatial Orientation	Knows one's location in relation to the environment; determines where other objects are in relation to one's self (for example, when using a map).
Stamina	Exerts oneself physically over long periods of time without tiring (which may include performing repetitive tasks such as hammering or lifting objects).
Stress Tolerance	Deals calmly and effectively with high stress situations (for example, tight deadlines, hostile individuals, emergency situations, dangerous situations).
Teaching Others	Helps others learn through formal or informal methods; identifies training needs; provides constructive feedback; coaches others on how to perform tasks; acts as a mentor.
Teamwork	Encourages and facilitates cooperation, pride, trust, and group identity; fosters commitment and team spirit; works with others to achieve goals.
Technical Competence	Uses knowledge that is acquired through formal training or extensive on-the-job experience to perform one's job; works with, understands, and evaluates technical information related to the job; advises others on technical issues.
Technical Problem Solving	Troubleshoots, diagnoses, analyzes, and identifies system malfunctions to determine the source and cause of the problem.
Technology Application	Uses machines, tools, or equipment effectively; uses computers and computer applications to analyze and communicate information in the appropriate format.

Competency	Description
Vision	Understands where the organization is headed and how to make a contribution; takes a long-term view and recognizes opportunities to help the organization accomplish its objectives or move toward the vision.
Visual Color Discrimination	Accurately matches or detects differences among colors, including shades of color and brightness.
Visual Identification	Accurately identifies people, animals, or objects based on knowledge of their characteristics.
Writing	Recognizes or uses correct English grammar, punctuation, and spelling; communicates information (for example, facts, ideas, or messages) in a brief, clear, and organized manner; produces written information, which may include technical material, that is appropriate for the intended audience.

MOSAIC Competencies: Trades & Labor Occupational Study (TLOS) - 2000-2002

Technical Competencies

Competency	Description
Administration and Management	Knowledge of planning, coordination, and execution of business functions, resource allocation, and production.
Aircraft Maintenance	Knowledge of aircraft engines, parts, and systems, including their designs, uses, repair, and maintenance.
Ammunition and Explosives	Knowledge of ammunition and explosives and their uses, interactions, dangers, production, handling, storage, and disposal.
Animal Husbandry	Knowledge of the care and handling of animals, including feeding, controlling, restraint, health, and reproduction.
Biology	Knowledge of the environment, plant and animal living tissue, cells, organisms, and entities, including their functions, interdependencies and interactions with each other and the environment.
Building and Construction	Knowledge of materials, methods, and the appropriate tools to construct objects, structures, and buildings.
Carpentry/Woodworking	Knowledge of materials, methods, and the appropriate tools to construct, install, finish, or repair wooden objects or structures.
Chemistry	Knowledge of chemicals, including hazardous materials, and their uses, interactions, dangers, production, storage, and disposal.
Communications and Media	Knowledge of the production, communication and dissemination of information and ideas to inform and entertain via written, oral, and visual media.
Computers	Knowledge of circuit boards, processors, chips, and computer hardware and software, including applications and programming.
Contracting/Procurement	Knowledge of various types of contracts, techniques for contracting or procurement, and contract negotiation and administration.
Cutting	Knowledge of meat cutting, including the grades and structure of meat, fish, or poultry.
Design	Knowledge of developing, producing, understanding, and using plans, blueprints, models, and maps, including the use of tools and instruments to produce precision technical drawings.
Electrical	Knowledge of electrical equipment, components, instruments, and systems, including their design, installation, testing, uses, repair, or maintenance.
Electronics	Knowledge of electronic theory, circuits, components, and material properties (excluding computers).
Engineering and Technology	Knowledge of engineering concepts, principles, and practices, and of equipment, tools, mechanical devices, and their uses to produce motion, light, power, technology, and other applications.
Food Production	Knowledge of planning, growing, and harvesting of food for consumption using appropriate equipment and techniques.
Food Service	Knowledge of preparing and serving food for consumption.
Foreign Language	Knowledge of sign language or of the structure and content of a foreign (non-English) language, including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition, and grammar.
Hazardous Materials	Knowledge of hazardous materials and waste and their uses, interactions, dangers, production, handling, storage, and disposal.
Horticulture	Knowledge of cultivating flowers, plants, and trees.
Industrial Equipment Operation	Knowledge of principles and methods for operating industrial equipment.
Legal, Government and Jurisprudence	Knowledge of laws, legal codes, court procedures, precedents, legal practices and documents, Government regulations, executive orders, agency rules, Government organization and functions, and the democratic political process.
Mechanical	Knowledge of machines and tools, including their designs, installation, uses, repair, and maintenance.

Competency	Description
Metal Processing and Metalworking	Knowledge of materials, methods, and appropriate tools to process, treat, form, or shape metal.
Painting	Knowledge of materials, methods, and appropriate tools to apply paint and other protective coating materials on drywall, wood, metal, glass, and other surfaces.
Pest Control	Knowledge of pest species and the methods and materials, including chemicals, for control or prevention.
Physics	Knowledge and prediction of physical principles, laws, and applications including air, water, material dynamics, light, atomic principles, heat, electric theory, earth formations, and meteorological and related natural phenomena.
Plumbing and Pipefitting	Knowledge of materials, methods, and the appropriate tools to install, maintain, or repair pipelines, pipe systems, and fixtures, including water, air, steam, gas, chemicals, or sewage.
Production and Processing	Knowledge of inputs, outputs, raw materials, waste, quality control, costs, maintaining inventory, and techniques for maximizing the manufacture and distribution of goods.
Public Safety and Security	Knowledge of the military, weaponry, and intelligence operations; public safety and security operations; occupational health and safety; investigation and inspection techniques; or rules, regulations, precautions, and prevention techniques for the protection of people, data, and property.
Road Work and Pavement	Knowledge of materials, methods, and appropriate tools to construct, maintain, or repair road surfaces, including sidewalks, parking lots, runways, etc.
Sales and Marketing	Knowledge of showing, promoting, and selling products and services.
Telecommunications	Knowledge of transmissions, broadcasting, switching, control, and operation of telecommunications systems.
Textiles	Knowledge of materials, methods, and appropriate tools to make and repair items made of fabric or leather.
Toolmaking	Knowledge of materials, methods, and appropriate tools to make or repair metal parts, tools, gauges, models, patterns, and machines.
Transportation	Knowledge of principles and methods for moving people or goods by air, rail, sea, or road, including costs and limits.
Vehicle Maintenance	Knowledge of motor vehicle engines, parts, and systems, including their designs, uses, repair, and maintenance.
Vehicle Operation	Knowledge of procedures for operating motor vehicles, including cars, trucks, or watercraft.

Science & Engineering Study Occupations

Science & Engineering Professional Occupations

Series	Occupation
GS-0401	General Biological Science
GS-0408	Ecology
GS-0414	Entomology
GS-0430	Botany
GS-0454	Rangeland Management
GS-0457	Social Conservation
GS-0460	Forestry
GS-0470	Soil Science
GS-0480	General Fish and Wildlife Administration
GS-0482	Fishery Biology
GS-0485	Wildlife Refuge Management
GS-0486	Wildlife Biology
GS-0801	General Engineering
GS-0803	Safety Engineering
GS-0806	Materials Engineering
GS-0807	Landscape Architecture
GS-0819	Environmental Engineering
GS-0830	Mechanical Engineering
GS-0840	Nuclear Engineering
GS-0850	Electrical Engineering
GS-0855	Electronics Engineering
GS-0861	Aerospace Engineering
GS-0880	Mining Engineering
GS-0881	Petroleum Engineering
GS-1301	General Physical Science
GS-1306	Health Physics
GS-1310	Physics
GS-1313	Geophysicist
GS-1315	Hydrology
GS-1320	Chemistry
GS-1321	Metallurgy
GS-1330	Astronomy and Space Science
GS-1350	Geology
GS-1370	Cartography
GS-1373	Land Surveying

Science & Engineering Technician Occupations

Series	Occupation
GS-0404	Biological Science Technician
GS-0455	Range Technician
GS-0458	Soil Conservation Technician
GS-0462	Forestry Technician
GS-0802	Engineering Technician
GS-0817	Surveying Technician
GS-0856	Electronics Technician
GS-1311	Physical Science Technician
GS-1316	Hydrologic Technician
GS-1371	Cartographic Technician

MOSAIC Competencies: Science and Engineering Occupational Study - 2000 – 2002

General Competencies

Competency	Description
Administration and Management	Knowledge of planning, coordination, and execution of business functions, resource allocation, and production.
Agility	Bends, stretches, twists, or reaches out with the body, arms, or legs.
Attention To Detail	Is thorough when performing work and conscientious about attending to detail.
Conflict Management	Manages and resolves conflicts, grievances, confrontations, or disagreements in a constructive manner to minimize negative personal impact.
Contracting/Procurement	Knowledge of various types of contracts, techniques or requirements (for example, Federal Acquisitions Regulations) for contracting or procurement, and contract negotiation and administration.
Creative Thinking	Uses imagination to develop new insights into situations and applies innovative solutions to problems; designs new methods where established methods and procedures are inapplicable or are unavailable.
Customer Service	Works with clients and customers (that is, any individuals who use or receive the services or products that your work unit produces, including the general public, individuals who work in the agency, other agencies, or organizations outside the Government) to assess their needs, provide information or assistance, resolve their problems, or satisfy their expectations; knows about available products and services; is committed to providing quality products and services.
Decision Making	Makes sound, well-informed, and objective decisions; perceives the impact and implications of decisions; commits to action, even in uncertain situations, to accomplish organizational goals; causes change, accomplish goals; monitors progress and evaluates outcomes.
Depth Perception	Accurately judges which of several objects is closer or farther away from the observer, or the distance between an object and the observer.
External Awareness	Identifies and understands economic, political, and social trends that affect the organization.
Eye-Hand Coordination	Accurately coordinates one's eyes with one's fingers, wrists, or arms to perform job-related tasks (for example, to move, carry, or manipulate objects).
Financial Management	Prepares, justifies, and/or administers the budget for program areas; plans, administers, and monitors expenditures to ensure cost-effective support of programs and policies; assesses financial condition of an organization.
Flexibility	Is open to change and new information; adapts behavior or work methods in response to new information, changing conditions, or unexpected obstacles; effectively deals with ambiguity.
Information Management	Identifies a need for and knows where or how to gather information, organizes and maintains information or information management systems.
Influencing/Negotiating	Persuades others to accept recommendations, cooperate, or change their behavior; works with others towards an agreement; negotiates to find mutually acceptable solutions.
Integrity/Honesty	Contributes to maintaining the integrity of the organization; displays high standards of ethical conduct and understands the impact of violating these standards on an organization, self, and others; is trustworthy.
Interpersonal Skills	Shows understanding, friendliness, courtesy, tact, empathy, concern, and politeness to others; develops and maintains effective relationships with others; may include effectively dealing with individuals who are difficult, hostile, or distressed; relates well to people from varied backgrounds and different situations; is sensitive to cultural diversity, race, gender, disabilities, and other individual differences.
Leadership	Influences, motivates, and challenges others; adapts leadership styles to a variety of situations.

Competency	Description
Learning	Uses efficient learning techniques to acquire and apply new knowledge and skills; uses training, feedback, or other opportunities for self-learning and development.
Managing Human Resources	Plans, distributes, coordinates, and monitors work assignments of others; evaluates work performance and provides feedback to others on their performance; ensures that staff are appropriately selected, utilized, and developed, and that they are treated in a fair and equitable manner.
Mathematical Reasoning	Solves practical problems by choosing appropriately from a variety of mathematical and statistical techniques.
Mental Visualization	Sees things in the mind by mentally organizing and processing symbols, pictures, graphs, objects, or other information (for example, sees a building from a blueprint, or sees the flow of work activities from reading a work plan).
Memory	Recalls information that has been presented previously.
Oral Communication	Expresses information (for example, ideas or facts) to individuals or groups effectively, taking into account the audience and nature of the information (for example, technical, sensitive, controversial); makes clear and convincing oral presentations; listens to others, attends to nonverbal cues, and responds appropriately.
Organizational Awareness	Knows the organization's mission and functions, and how its social, political, and technological systems work and operate effectively within them; this includes the programs, policies, procedures, rules, and regulations of the organization.
Perceptual Speed	Quickly and accurately sees detail in words, numbers, pictures, and graphs.
Peripheral Vision	Sees objects or movement of objects to one's side when the eyes are focused forward.
Physical Strength	Exerts maximum muscle force to lift, push, pull, or carry objects; performs moderately laboring work.
Planning and Evaluating	Organizes work, sets priorities, and determines resource requirements; determines short- or long-term goals and strategies to achieve them; coordinates with other organizations or parts of the organization.
Problem Solving	Identifies problems; determines accuracy and relevance of information; uses sound judgment to generate and evaluate alternatives, and to make recommendations.
Project Management	Applies principles, methods, or tools for developing, scheduling, coordinating, monitoring, evaluating, and managing projects and resources, including technical performance.
Reading	Understands and interprets written material, including technical material, rules, regulations, instructions, reports, charts, graphs, or tables; applies what is learned from written material to specific situations.
Reasoning	Identifies rules, principles, or relationships that explain facts, data, or other information; analyzes information and makes correct inferences or draws accurate conclusions.
Self-Esteem	Believes in own self-worth; maintains a positive view of self and displays a professional image.
Self-Management	Sets well-defined and realistic personal goals; displays a high level of initiative, effort, and commitment towards completing assignments in a timely manner; works with minimal supervision; is motivated to achieve; demonstrates responsible behavior and determines responsible behavior.
Spatial Orientation	Knows one's location in relation to the environment; determines where other objects are in relation to one's self (for example, when using a map).
Stamina	Exerts oneself physically over long periods of time without tiring (which may include performing repetitive tasks such as data entry or coding).
Strategic Thinking	Formulates effective strategies consistent with the business and competitive strategy of the organization in a global economy; examines policy issues and strategic planning with a long term perspective; determines objectives and sets priorities; anticipates potential threats or opportunities.
Stress Tolerance	Deals calmly and effectively with high stress situations (for example, tight deadlines, hostile individuals, emergency situations, dangerous situations).

Competency	Description
Teaching Others	Helps others learn through formal and informal methods; identifies training needs; provides constructive feedback; coaches others on how to perform tasks; acts as a mentor.
Teamwork	Encourages and facilitates cooperation, pride, trust, and group identity; fosters commitment and team spirit; works with others to achieve goals.
Technical Competence	Uses knowledge that is acquired through formal training or extensive on-the-job experience to perform one's job; works with, understands, and evaluates technical information related to the job; advises others on technical issues.
Technology Application	Uses machines, tools, instruments, or equipment effectively; uses computers and computer applications to analyze and communicate information in the appropriate format.
Vision	Understands where the organization is headed and how to make a contribution; takes a long-term view and recognizes opportunities to help the organization accomplish its objectives or move toward the vision.
Visual Color Discrimination	Accurately matches or detects differences between colors, including shades of color and brightness.
Visual Identification	Accurately identifies people, animals, or objects based on knowledge of their characteristics.
Writing	Recognizes or uses correct English grammar, punctuation, and spelling; communicates information (for example, facts, ideas, or messages) in a succinct and organized manner; produces written information, which may include technical material, that is appropriate for the intended audience

MOSAIC Competencies: Science and Engineering Occupational Study - 2000 – 2002

Technical Competencies

Competency	Description
Accounting	Knowledge of traditional accounting practices including accrual, obligations, and costs methods.
Aerospace Engineering	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, and theories of aerodynamics or space environments related to the design, development, testing, analysis, application, and utilization of aerospace and aeronautical devices, vehicles, systems, and equipment.
Architecture	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, theories, and practices used in the planning, design, construction, and maintenance of buildings or other structures, taking into consideration aesthetic and functional concerns.
Astronomy	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, and theories of the physical processes leading to the emission of electromagnetic radiation or particles from celestial bodies, the measurement and physical characteristics of celestial bodies, including cosmic microwave background, sub-millimeter technology, galaxies, star formations, and planetary science.
Biology	Knowledge of plant and animal living tissue, cells, organisms, and entities, including their functions, interdependencies, and interactions with each other.
Botany	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, and theories of plants, including structures and functions, classification, taxonomy, plant communities, distribution, habitat requirements, life histories, reproduction, conservation, and care of plant species.
Building and Construction	Knowledge of the materials, methods, systems, and the tools used to construct objects, structures, and buildings.
Cartography	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, theories, and methods related to the research, design, development, or revision of maps, charts, and related cartographic products, and photogrammatic and cartographic processing.
Chemical Engineering	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, and theories related to the chemical composition or physical characteristics of materials for the design, construction, operation, and improvement of processes or systems.
Chemistry	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, and theories of the composition, structure, and properties of substances, and of the chemical processes and transformations, including uses of chemicals and their interactions, danger signs, production techniques, and disposal methods.
Civil Engineering	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, theories, and methods required to plan, design, construct, operate, and maintain facilities such as buildings, transportation systems, water and sanitary systems, and other public works systems.
Computers and Electronics	Knowledge of the design and operation of electric circuit boards, processors, chips, and computer hardware or software systems, including applications and programming.
Cost-Benefit Analysis	Knowledge of the principles and methods of cost-benefit analysis, including the time value of money, present value concepts, and quantifying tangible and intangible benefits.
Data Systems	Knowledge of computer hardware and software development and systems as they apply to the conception, specification, analysis, planning, development, installation, test, modification and use of data handling and computing systems in support of aerospace flight and ground systems.
Design	Knowledge of conceptualizing, developing, producing, understanding, and using plans, models, blueprints, and maps, including the use of tools and instruments to produce precision technical drawings, working prototypes, components, or systems.
Earth Science	Knowledge of interdisciplinary disciplines associated with the earth's composition, structure, or other physical aspects, including atmosphere.
Ecology	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, and theories of the interrelationships among organisms and their environment, including competition and predation, evolution and natural selection, population dynamics, and the impact of natural phenomena or human actions on natural systems, processes, and biota.

Competency	Description
Economics	Knowledge of economic policy, principles, and practices, market and non-market values, and the analysis and reporting of economic data.
Education and Training	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, and theories of instructional methods such as teaching, training, research, making presentations, lecturing, and testing.
Electrical Engineering	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, theories, and methods related to the design, analysis, test, and integration of electrical systems; energy conversion; electrical power generation; and energy transmission, control, distribution or use.
Electronics Engineering	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, theories, and methods related to the design, analysis, test, fabrication, or verification of analog or digital electronic systems.
Entomology	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, and theories of insects, including taxonomy, morphology, behavior, life cycles, population dynamics, host-insect interactions, the role of insects in natural and managed ecosystems, and the regulation, prevention, and control of pest-related problems.
Environmental Engineering	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, theories, and methods to protect and improve the quality of the environment and its resources; and to monitor, control, abate, and prevent pollutants.
Facilities	Knowledge of the physical, engineering, and experimental equipment and operational characteristics of facilities, and safety and equipment development designed to support aerospace activities.
Fire Management	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, and theories of fire management, including the characteristics, behavior, and ecology of fire; methodologies, strategies, and equipment used in prescribed fires; fire detection, prevention, and suppression strategies; and integration of fire with natural resource management.
Fishery Biology	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, and theories of aquatic life, including classification, taxonomy, population dynamics, distribution, habitat requirements, life histories, reproduction, behaviors, conservation, and care of aquatic species.
Flight Systems	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, and theories related to the development, design, test, and evaluation of aerospace flight vehicles and their component subsystems, or their related external systems.
Fluid Dynamics and Mechanics	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, and theories of computational fluid dynamics, fluid mechanics, flight dynamics, flight structures, the force and motion mechanics of vehicles in various atmospheric and celestial environments, aerothermodynamics, and the characteristics of electrically conducting fluids under the action of magnetic and electric fields.
Forensics	Knowledge of procedures of civil, criminal, or administrative hearings, evidence collection, including the delivery and receipt of evidence, classes of evidence, and rules of evidence and legal procedures.
Forest Management	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, and theories of silviculture and forest ecology, forest use, management, harvesting, conducting inventories, regeneration, sustainability, and conservation; and the role of disturbances in timberland resources.
Forest Management	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, and theories of silviculture and forest ecology, forest use, management, harvesting, conducting inventories, regeneration, sustainability, and conservation; and the role of disturbances in timberland resources.
General Engineering	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, and theories of engineering and their practical applications.
Genetics	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, and theories of genetics, including the biochemistry of DNA, gene interaction, gene expression, gene inheritance, population genetics, adaptation, and evolution.
Geography	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, theories, and methods for describing the location and distribution of land, sea, and air masses, including their physical locations, relationships, characteristics, and what the land supports.
Geology	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, and theories of the origins and structure of the earth, including the physical forces that have shaped it and its physical and organic history.
Geophysics	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, and theories related to solid earth structure, global seismic patterns, lithosphere, atmosphere, and the behavior of the earth's gravitational, magnetic, and electrical fields, and other forces affecting the earth and its environment.

Competency	Description
Geotechnical Engineering	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, theories, and methods related to the investigation and evaluation of subsurface soil or geologic conditions and properties for the purpose of designing stable foundation systems, earthen structures, or the remediation of subsurface conditions.
Health Physics	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, theories, and methods pertaining to the protection of people, their environment, and equipment from hazards (for example, radiation or hazardous chemicals) and the control of radioactive material.
Horticulture	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, theories, and practices of cultivation or crop management, physiological processes in plant growth and crop yield.
Hydraulic Engineering	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, theories, and methods applicable to analysis of the flow of fluids (open channel and pressure flow), estimation of river stages, and design of hydraulic structures, drainage structures, pipes, navigation facilities, reservoirs, locks, and dams.
Hydrology	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, theories, and methods related to the magnitude, distribution, and quality of water resources including watershed management, climatology, geomorphology, groundwater hydrology, water quality, water resource management, and groundwater/surface water interactions.
Landscape Architecture	Knowledge of the concepts, theories, and practices used in the planning, designing, construction, and adaptation of outdoor features, taking into consideration recreation planning, requirements, aesthetic value, and compatibility with other developments and resources.
Legal, Government and Jurisprudence	Knowledge of laws, legal codes, court procedures, precedents, legal practices and documents, Government regulations, executive orders, agency rules, Government organization and functions, and the democratic political process.
Life Sciences and Systems	Knowledge of life sciences that involve the theoretical and experimental research of life systems.
Manufacturing	Knowledge of the specifications, tools, inputs, raw materials, outputs, and waste related to the manufacture of prototypes, models, systems, or other products.
Materials Engineering	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, theories, and methods related to the composition, structures, and properties of materials, their use, behavior and performance under environmental influences, and the identification, processing, and manufacture of optimal materials for various applications.
Measurement and Instrumentation	Knowledge of electronics and related electrical engineering disciplines necessary for the research and development of sensors, electronic measurement devices, and instrumentation systems for aerospace systems and components.
Mechanical Engineering	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, theories, and methods related to planning, designing, developing, testing, or evaluating thermodynamic, mechanical, electro-mechanical, pneumatic, hydraulic, or structural equipment, systems, models, tools, or specialized mechanical devices.
Mechanics	Knowledge of machines and tools, including their design, use, benefits, repair, operation, and maintenance.
Metallurgy	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, and theories related to the study of extracting, refining, alloying, and preparing metals for use; and their properties and behavior as affected by the composition, treatment in manufacture, and conditions of use.
Mining Engineering	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, theories, and methods related to rock mechanics; the exploration, excavation, extraction, processing and transporting of mineral resources; and the conservation and development of mineral lands, materials, and deposits.
Modeling and Simulation	Knowledge of the tools and techniques used to develop functional, physical, or prototype models and simulations for test and evaluation programs, the prediction of behavior and phenomena, and to visually communicate concepts.
Nuclear Engineering	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, theories, and application of nuclear technologies including research, development, construction, operation, testing, and maintenance of nuclear reactors, radiation generating devices, and associated systems and equipment.
Nuclear Physics	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, theories, and methods related to the prediction of nuclear interactions and reactions, including practices and methods used to produce, measure, use, or observe such reactions in stars, nuclear weapons systems, and radiation shielding.

Competency	Description
Operations	Knowledge of engineering or physical science disciplines to support space flight operations, training or planning; serving as an astronaut or mission specialist.
Pathology	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, and theories of plant, insect, or animal diseases and host/pathogen relationships, including effects on natural and managed ecosystems.
Petroleum Engineering	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, theories, and methods related to the exploration, development, extraction, recovery, processing, and conservation of fluid minerals, geothermal resources, organic compounds, or natural gas resources.
Physics	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, theories, and methods to investigate and apply the relations between space, time, matter, and energy in the areas of gravity, atomic principles, mechanics, heat, light, sound, electricity, magnetism, and related natural phenomena.
Propulsion and Power	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, and theories of liquid, solid, electrical, chemical, electrochemical, or nuclear propulsion and power generation systems, their component parts and subsystems, and the direct and indirect conversion of energy into power for various applications.
Psychology	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, and theories of human behavior and performance in various contexts, mental processes, or the assessment and treatment of behavioral and affective disorders.
Public Planning	Knowledge of functions, principles, methods, and techniques of public planning, including those related to community planning, outdoor recreation planning, and natural resource management, such as demand forecasting, environmental impact analysis, financial forecasting, and land use planning and zoning.
Public Safety and Security	Knowledge of intelligence operations; public safety and security operations; occupational health and safety; investigation and inspection techniques; or rules, regulations, precautions, and prevention techniques for the protection of people, data, and property.
Quality Management	Knowledge of the principles, methods, and tools of quality assurance, quality control, and reliability used to ensure that a project, system, or product fulfills requirements and standards.
Rangeland Management	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, and theories of non-forested or forested land ecosystems, including rangeland use, management, and monitoring; conducting inventories; and the role of disturbances in rangeland ecosystems.
Remote Sensing	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, theories, and methods necessary to obtain, use, and interpret data from remote sensing sources, including aircrafts and satellites.
Research	Knowledge of the scientific principles, methods, and processes used to conduct a systematic and objective inquiry; including study design, collection, analysis, and interpretation of data; and the reporting of results.
Risk Management	Knowledge of the principles, methods, and tools used for risk assessment and mitigation, including assessment of failures and their consequences.
Safety Engineering	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, theories, and methods to identify, control, mitigate, and eliminate safety hazards in the design and use of facilities, equipment, operations, and work processes.
Sociology and Anthropology	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, and theories of group behavior and dynamics; societal trends and influences; and cultures, their history, migrations, ethnicity, and origins.
Soil Science	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, or theories of soil composition, formation, classification, mapping, testing, and management, including erosion, pollution, conservation, and watershed management.
Space Science	Knowledge of physical science and engineering necessary to conduct research or study the solar system and beyond.
Structural Engineering	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, theories, and methods related to the design and analysis of complex structures using a variety of materials. Structures may include aerospace systems or structures, and other determinate or indeterminate systems.
Surveying	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, theories, and methods used in the measurement or determination of land boundaries, distances, elevations, areas, angles, and other features of the earth's surface.
Telecommunications	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, and theories of transmissions, broadcasting, switching, control, construction, or operation of telecommunications systems.

Competency	Description
Transportation Engineering	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, theories, and methods applicable to planning, designing, and constructing of transportation systems including traffic analysis, signal analysis, highway capacity, pavement design, bridge construction, planning of transportation projects, environmental analysis of transportation facilities, and transportation network analysis.
Wildlife Biology	Knowledge of the concepts, principles, and theories of wildlife, including classification, taxonomy, population dynamics, distribution, habitat requirements, life histories, reproduction, behaviors, conservation, and care of wildlife.

Appendix G - OPM's Job Analysis Methodology

Introduction

There are a number of valid approaches to job analysis. The method described below provides one model. You are free to choose any method, provided that it is consistent with the *Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures* (see www.uniformguidelines.com).

OPM's Job Analysis Methodology

OPM has been conducting Governmentwide occupational analyses for more than 10 years. Through these studies, we have identified critical competencies for more than 200 Federal clerical, technical, professional, and administrative occupations. By the end of 2002, critical competencies will have been identified for a total of more than 400 Federal occupations, including trade and labor occupations.

Our methodology establishes a "common language" for analyzing and describing jobs at all levels within an occupational field, and provides a more realistic basis for matching persons with jobs.

For example, rather than focusing on narrow indicators, such as years of experience or number of credit hours of education, our methodology looks at the full range and quality of an applicant's education and experience in terms of how well it prepared him or her to perform the job.

How competencies should be written

You should define competencies simply and clearly and make sure that they embody a single, readily identifiable characteristic. Avoid stating a competency in way that would confuse it with a task - as frequently happens when competency statements begin with a statement such as "Ability to (perform a task)." It is also good practice to make the competency definitions behaviorally based to the extent that an individual possessing that competency can be assessed through measurable behaviors. One way to do this to incorporate action verbs into the competency definitions (except for definitions of knowledge areas).

Qualifiers such as "Thorough Knowledge, Considerable Skill, or Basic Understanding," are unnecessary. These qualifiers should not be part of the competency definition - they do not provide meaningful information to distinguish examples of performance clearly.

- See the MOSAIC Competencies, in Appendix F, for OPM's competencies.

Task and competency linkages

According to the *Uniform Guidelines*, tasks should be rated on importance for job performance and on the time spent/frequency. Competencies should be rated on importance, need at entry, and distinguishing value (between superior and barely acceptable performance). Examples of additional scales that can be used in the job analysis process are at the end of this appendix.

The *Uniform Guidelines* also require that the tasks and competencies be linked to demonstrate the respective job-relatedness of competencies. The linkage also ensures that there is a clear relationship between the tasks performed on the job and the competencies required to perform those tasks.

OPM's Job Analysis Methodology

The following table provides an overview of OPM's job analysis methodology illustrated through an example of developing a crediting plan/rating schedule. (The crediting plan/rating schedule is just one of many assessment tools available.) As you conduct the following steps, you will need the worksheets (G-8 to G-13) found in this appendix.

Step	Action
1	Collect information about the job. A good place to start is by reviewing existing materials that describe the work that is performed on the job. Such materials include: • Position descriptions, • Classification standards, • Subject matter expert (SME) input, • Performance standards, and • Occupational studies. The tasks and competencies, Appendix F, developed through OPM's Governmentwide occupational studies are also a good source of information. Since these studies are based on a comprehensive review of job information and are very broad in scope, you may not need to develop many additional tasks and competencies beyond those included in these studies.
2	Use the **Job Analysis Worksheet for Tasks** to list the tasks that are required to perform successfully on the job based on the information and/or SME input (along with the source of that information) collected in Step 1.

Step	Action
3	On the Job Analysis Worksheet for Tasks: a) Have the SMEs individually rate the tasks on the importance and frequency scales provided on the worksheet. (Note the scales shown on the worksheets are examples of scales that have been used in past job analyses. Alternative scales are provided at the end of this appendix); b) Eliminate tasks that were rated as "Not Performed" on either the importance or frequency scale by at least half of the SMEs. Of the tasks that remain, compute an average rating (excluding any "0=Not Performed" ratings from the average) across SMEs for each task on each scale; and c) Then identify which tasks are critical for the job. This involves determining cutoffs for both the importance and frequency scales. A recommended cutoff is 3.0 or above for both scales. (This will vary by the scale used, depending on the anchors associated with each scale rating). That is, tasks that, on average, were rated 3.0 or above on both importance and frequency are considered critical for the job.
4	Use the **Job Analysis Worksheet for Competencies** to list competencies that are required to perform successfully in the job based on the job information collected and/or SME input, along with the source of that information (see Chapter 2, Section C, for how competencies should be stated).
5	On the Job Analysis Worksheet for Competencies: a) Have the SMEs individually rate the competencies on the importance, need at entry, and distinguishing value scales. (Again, these scales are examples of scales used in past job analyses. Alternative scales are provided at the end of this appendix); b) Then average the SME ratings to produce an overall rating for each competency for each scale; and c) Once you have determined the SME average ratings, identify which competencies are critical for the job, based on importance and need at entry. This involves determining cutoffs for each of these scales. Recommended cutoffs for the scales shown on the worksheet are 3.0 or above for importance and 2.0 or below on need at entry. Competencies with average ratings that meet these cutoffs are considered critical for the job. Then, the ratings on the distinguishing value scale may be used to guide your decision on which of the critical competencies to include in the assessment process. A recommended cutoff on the distinguishing value scale shown on the worksheet is 3.0 or above. (Again, this will vary by the scale used, depending on the anchors associated with each scale rating).

Step	Action
6	Use the **Worksheet for Task and Competency Linkages** to make the linkage ratings by: a) In the Task No. column, write the numbers of the tasks that were identified as critical in Step 1; b) Write the competency numbers of the critical competencies, identified in Step 5, across the top row; c) Next, have each SME work independently to rate the extent to which each competency is important for effective task performance. Again, SME ratings should be averaged to come up with an overall rating for each task-competency linkage. It is recommended that a cutoff of 3.0 be used for this scale to determine which competencies are linked to each task. (**Note**: If any tasks/competencies are not linked, you should reconsider whether all critical tasks and competencies have been considered); and d) You and SMEs should then eliminate any tasks not linked to one or more competencies and only competencies that are not linked to at least one task.
7	Of the competencies remaining at the end of Step 6, eliminate competencies that cannot be reasonably assessed via a rating schedule. The resulting competencies will later on be considered for assessment.
8	Determine which competencies will be used as selective and quality ranking factors (if any). **Note:** Selective factors must be documented. To document any selective factors, use a SF-39A, *Request and Justification for Selective and Quality Ranking Factors* (see Records Retention and Disposition Appendix C)
9	Use the **Accomplishments Worksheet** to record example accomplishments and SME level ratings. Potential sources of accomplishments include: - SMEs, - Job information, and - Past applications. Accomplishments may come from both work and nonwork related experiences.
10	On the Accomplishments Worksheet have: a) SMEs rate the accomplishments as demonstrating a "high, medium, or low" level of the writing competency, which is typically done using a 1 to 3 rating. When making these ratings, SMEs should keep in mind that applicants should possess more in-depth, extensive, varied, and difficult experience at each successive level. Accomplishments incorporated in rating schedule items or benchmark descriptions should help differentiate these levels; and b) Then average the SME ratings to produce an overall level rating for each accomplishment.
11	If the rating schedule is a closed-ended, automated format, use the **Multiple Choice/Yes-No Worksheet** to develop and record rating schedule items for each competency based on the accomplishments generated in Steps 9 and 10. If candidates provide written responses to open-ended questions that have to be manually scored, use the **Rating Schedule Benchmark Worksheet** to develop and record benchmark level descriptions and examples for each competency that will be assessed.

Step	Action
12	After the rating schedule is developed, the maximum number of points an applicant may receive for each response must be determined.

The SME high/medium/low ratings can be used to help determine the number of points associated with each item/benchmark level.

Example: You may assign 5 points for a "high" response, 3 points for a "medium" response, and 1 point for a "low" response. If there are five competencies and the maximum number of points that can be awarded for each competency is 5, the maximum number of points an applicant can receive is 25. Therefore, 25 points transmute to a rating of 100).

Note: Appendix H provides a variety of different transmutation tables for your use. Determine the raw score and then transmute the raw score to a score that falls within 70 to 100 (see CFR 337). Appropriate veterans preference points are then added to those candidates who meet qualification requirements. |

Special note

The following sample worksheets are provided to help you fill-out the worksheets needed to complete the job analysis.

Sample Job Analysis Worksheet for Tasks
Sample Job Analysis Worksheet for Competencies
Sample Job Analysis For Task and Competency Linkage
Sample Accomplishments Worksheet
Sample Multiple Choice/Yes-No Rating Schedule Worksheet
Sample Rating Schedule Benchmark Worksheet
Occupational Analysis Scales

Job Analysis Worksheet for Tasks

Task	Source	Importance	Frequency

Importance Scale	Frequency
How important is this task to the job?	How often is the task performed?
0 = Not Performed	0 = Not Performed
1 = Not Important	1 = Every few months to yearly
2 = Somewhat Important	2 = Every few weeks to monthly
3 = Important	3 = Every few days to weekly
4 = Very Important	4 = Every few hours to daily
5 = Extremely Important	5 = Hourly to many times each hour

Signature:_____

Title:_____

Date:_____

Job Analysis Worksheet for Competencies

Competency	Source	Importance	Need at Entry	Distinguishing Value

Importance Scale	Need At Entry Scale	Distinguishing Value Scale
How important is this competency for effective job performance?	When is this competency needed for effective job performance?	How valuable is this competency for distinguishing superior from barely acceptable employees?
1 = Not Important	1 = Needed the first day	1 = Not Valuable
2 = Somewhat Important	2 = Must be acquired within the first 3 months	2 = Somewhat Valuable
3 = Important	3 = Must be acquired within the first 4-6 months	3 = Valuable
4 = Very Important	4 = Must be acquired after the first 6 months	4 = Very Valuable
5 = Extremely Important		5 = Extremely Valuable

Signature:_____

Title:_____

Date:_____

Job Analysis Worksheet For Task And Competency Linkage

Linkage Scale

How important is this competency for effective task performance?

1 = Not Important
2 = Somewhat Important
3 = Important
4 = Very Important
5 = Extremely Important

Competency Number														
Task Number														

Signature:_____

Title:_____

Date:_____

Accomplishments Worksheet

Competency Title/Definition:

Accomplishments	Level Rating (High, Medium, Low)
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	

Signature:_____Signature:_____

Title:_____Title:_____

Date:_____Date:_____

Multiple Choice/Yes-No Rating Schedule Worksheet

Competency Title/Definition
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.

Signature:_____Signature:_____

Title:_____Title:_____

Date:_____Date:_____

Rating Schedule Benchmark Worksheet

Competency Title/Definition:

HIGH

Description:

Examples:

MEDIUM

Description:

Examples:

LOW

Description:

Examples:

Signature:_____Signature:_____

Title:_____Title:_____

Date:_____Date:_____

Sample Job Analysis Worksheet For Tasks

Task	Source	Importance	Frequency
1. Contacts others orally to obtain information.	OPM'S MOSAIC Study		
2. Reads and understands nontechnical materials (e.g., letters, memoranda, electronic mail, simple instructions.	OPM'S MOSAIC Study		
3. Serves as primary point of contact for a specific subject area.	OPM'S MOSAIC Study		
4. Interprets and applies laws, regulations, policies, standards, or procedures to specific issues.	Position Description		
5. Promotes or develops and maintains good working relationships with key individuals or groups.	Position Description		
6. Acquires and maintains a working knowledge of relevant laws, regulations, policies, standards, or procedures.	Position Description		
7. Provides technical advice in subject matter area to others.	Classification Standard		
8. Collaborates with others or works on teams to accomplish work-related activities.	Classification Standard		
9. Uses computer systems or applications to access, create, edit, print, send, retrieve, or manipulate data, files, or other information.	Classification Standard		
10. Discusses results, problems, plans, suggestions, terms, or conditions with others.	Subject Matter Experts		
11. Uses addition, subtraction, division, or multiplication.	Subject Matter Experts		
12. Enters data or other information into computer.	Subject Matter Experts		

Importance Scale	Frequency
How important is this task to the job?	How often is the task performed?
0 = Not Performed	0 = Not Performed
1 = Not Important	1 = Every few months to yearly
2 = Somewhat Important	2 = Every few weeks to monthly
3 = Important	3 = Every few days to weekly
4 = Very Important	4 = Every few hours to daily
5 = Extremely Important	5 = Hourly to many times each hour

Signature:_____

Title:_____

Date:_____

Sample Job Analysis Worksheet For Competencies

Competency	Source	Importance	Need At Entry	Distinguishing Value
1. Reading	OPM'S Mosaic Study			
2. Writing	OPM'S Mosaic Study			
3. Interpersonal Skills	Position Description			
4. Oral Communication	Position Description			
5. Reasoning	Classification Standard			
6. Decision Making	Classification Standard			
7. Customer Service	Classification Standard			
8. Arithmetic	Subject Matter Experts			
9. Mathematical Reasoning	Subject Matter Experts			
10. Personnel and Human Resources	Subject Matter Experts			

Importance Scale	Need At Entry Scale	Distinguishing Value Scale
How important is this competency for effective job performance?	When is this competency needed for effective job performance?	How valuable is this competency for distinguishing superior from barely acceptable employees?
1 = Not Important	1 = Needed the first day	1 = Not Valuable
2 = Somewhat Important	2 = Must be acquired within the first 3 months	2 = Somewhat Valuable
3 = Important	3 = Must be acquired within the first 4-6 months	3 = Valuable
4 = Very Important	4 = Must be acquired after the first 6 months	4 = Very Valuable
5 = Extremely Important		5 = Extremely Valuable

Signature:_____

Title:_____

Date:_____

Sample Job Analysis For Task And Competency Linkage

Linkage Scale

How important is this competency for effective task performance?

1 = Not Important
2 = Somewhat Important
3 = Important
4 = Very Important
5 = Extremely Important

Competency Number														
Task Number	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**10**						
1														
2														
3														
4														
5														
6														
7														
8														
9														
10														

Signature:_____

Title:_____

Date:_____

Sample Accomplishments Worksheet

Competency Title/Definition: Writing
Recognizes or uses correct English grammar, punctuation, and spelling; communicates information (for example, facts, ideas, or messages) in a succinct and organized manner; produces written information, which may include technical material, that is appropriate for the intended audience.

Accomplishments	Level Rating (High, Medium, Low)
1. I wrote a resource booklet explaining the rules and regulations on reinstatement after retirement. I received a lot of positive feedback from customers on the booklet.	High
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	

Signature:_____ Signature:_____

Title:_____ Title:_____

Date:_____ Date:_____

Sample Multiple Choice/Yes-No Rating Schedule Worksheet

Competency Title/Definition: Writing Recognizes or uses correct English grammar, punctuation, and spelling; communicates information (for example, facts, ideas, or messages) in a succinct and organized manner; produces written information, which may include technical material that is appropriate for the intended audience.

1. Have you successfully done work that involved translating technical or complex language (e.g., laws, regulations) into language that was more easily understood?
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.

Signature:_____Signature:_____

Title:_____Title:_____

Date:_____Date:_____

Sample Rating Schedule Benchmark Worksheet

Competency Title/Definition: Writing

Recognizes or uses correct English grammar, punctuation, and spelling; communicates information (for example, facts, ideas or messages) in a succinct and organized manner; produces written information, which may include technical material, that is appropriate for the intended audience.

HIGH

Description: Composes documents or correspondence involving complex or technical information, and adapts writing to the audience's level of knowledge. Proofreads or edits complex or technical writing of others.

Examples
- Composes complex correspondence or other written work
- Explains, in writing, the application of laws, regulations, precedents, and practices
- Writes and publishes articles on program direction and content

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MEDIUM

Description:

Examples:

LOW

Description:

Examples:

Signature:_____Signature:_____

Title:_____Title:_____

Date:_____Date:_____

Occupational Analysis Scales

(We developed these scales for use in our MOSAIC surveys. They are available for you to use in your job analysis process).

Task Scales

Importance Scale	Frequency	Frequency
How important is this task to the job?	How often is the task performed?	Compared to all other tasks you perform, how much time do you spend performing this task?
0 = Not Performed	0 = Not Performed	0 = Not Performed
1 = Not Important	1 = Every few months to yearly	1 = Considerably Less Than Most Tasks
2 = Somewhat Important	2 = Every few weeks to monthly	2 = Somewhat Less Than Most Tasks
3 = Important	3 = Every few days to weekly	3 = Same As Most Tasks
4 = Very Important	4 = Every few hours to daily	4 = Somewhat More Than Most Tasks
5 = Extremely Important	5 = Hourly to many times each hour	5 = Considerably More Than Most Tasks

Competency Scales

Importance Scale	Distinguishing Value Scale
How important is this competency for effective job performance?	How valuable is this competency for distinguishing superior from barely acceptable employees?
1 = Not Important	1 = Not Valuable
2 = Somewhat Important	2 = Somewhat Valuable
3 = Important	3 = Valuable
4 = Very Important	4 = Very Valuable
5 = Extremely Important	5 = Extremely Valuable

Need At Entry Scale	Need At Entry Scale
When is this competency needed for effective job performance?	To what extent is it necessary that the employee possess this competency when entering the job?
1 = Needed the first day	1 = Essential at Entry because those who do not possess it will not acquire it through training or experience
2 = Must be acquired within the first 3 months	2 = Desirable at Entry because those who possess it develop competence more readily
3 = Must be acquired within the first 4-6 months	3 = Not Need at Entry because it is acquired through training or experience
4 = Must be acquired after the first 6 months	

Appendix H - Model Agency-Based Accountability Coverage Agenda

The information in this appendix was provided by the Office of Personnel Management's Center for Merit Systems Accountability (CSMA). This appendix provides information on Model Agency-Based Accountability Coverage Agenda and Merit Principle Assessment.

Merit Principles and Law

Model Agency-Based Accountability Coverage Agenda

OPM's Merit Systems Compliance Group ensures that agencies comply with the following merit principles or laws when reviewing Delegated Examining Units.

Merit Principle or Law	Expected Results
Recruitment should be from qualified individuals from appropriate sources in an endeavor to achieve a work force from all segments of society, and selection and advancement should be determined solely on the basis of relative ability, knowledge, and skills, after fair and open competition which assures that all receive equal opportunity." 5 U.S.C. § 2301(b)(1)	• Selectees are qualified. • Recruitment activities yield a balanced pool of quality applicants. • Issues of diversity manifest imbalance in the work force or (past) applicant pools are considered in planning recruitment. • Valid selection criteria are documented and applied to each recruitment action. • Competition is open: the application process complies with Merit System Principles and other related legal requirements. • Qualification requirements used are job-related and are applied equitably. • Applicants with comparable qualifications receive comparable treatment; the examining process does not introduce or reinforce inappropriate biases in rating, referral, selection, placement, or compensation. • Application acceptance, candidate referral, and interview and placement practices are "neutral" they do not arbitrarily favor or disfavor specific candidates or type of applicants.

Merit Principle or Law	Expected Results
Agency policies and procedures for accepting late applications are in accordance with 5 U.S.C § 3305 and 5 Part CFR 332, Subpart C.	• Applicants entitled to file late applications are identified and given appropriate opportunities and considerations. • Late applications received from 10 point veterans for case exams are maintained, and appropriate notification is provided for future case examinations.
Veterans' Preference Act of 1944 (as amended)	Determinations regarding eligibility for veterans' preference (VP) are properly made, and individuals with VP are afforded their legal rights in recruitment, referral, consideration, and selection.
"All employees and applicants for employment should receive fair and equitable treatment in all aspects of personnel management without regard to political affiliation, race, color, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, age, or handicapping condition, and with proper regard for their privacy and constitutional rights." 5 U.S.C. § 2301(b)(2)	• Information is released under the Freedom of Information and Privacy Acts in a way that does not violate the privacy of any employee or applicant. • Information is maintained in a way that does not violate the privacy of any employee or applicant. • Delegated examining process is monitored to ensure applicants who are entitled to lost consideration benefits, due to erroneous certification or out-of-order selection, receive the priority considerations to which they are entitled.
"The Federal work force should be used efficiently and effectively." 5 U.S.C. § 2301(b)(5)	The delegated examining process produces quality candidates in a timely manner at a reasonable cost. Delegated examining activities support public policy on placement of surplus and displaced employees.

Merit Principle Assessment

Purpose of Merit Principle Assessment

The following questions should be used in conjunction with the Agency-Based Accountability Coverage Agenda. These questions are used to determine whether the action under review adheres to Merit System Principles and law.

Merit Principle	Question
Recruitment is from qualified individuals, from appropriate sources.	- Is recruitment appropriately targeted (e.g., toward under-represented groups and/or veterans)? - Does recruitment produce a sufficient number of high quality applicants? - Do appointees/selectees meet appropriate qualification requirements? - Were sufficient numbers of eligibles referred on this certificate for the number of vacancies (considering possible failure to reply, lack of interest, and candidate unavailability?)
Fair and Open Competition	- Does the length of the open period provide applicants a reasonable opportunity to compete, considering such factors as the volume of applications expected and the area of publicity? - Are jobs publicized through OPM's USAJOBS? - Can applicants readily obtain sufficiently detailed information on application procedures/materials, qualifications, and job requirements? - Are procedures in place to insure that applicants are entitled to file late applications receive appropriate consideration? - Are late applications from 10-point veterans' preference eligibles appropriately maintained for positions filled under case examining procedures?
Selection are based on relative ability, knowledge, and skills	- Are selection criteria resulting in selections of high quality? - Are KSAs and crediting plans based on job requirements, and appropriate to the level of competition?

Merit Principle	Question
Employees and applicants receive fair and equitable treatment	• Does correspondence indicate that the agency responds to Freedom of Information Act requests and inquiries in a timely and open manner, while insuring the privacy of applicants and employees? • Do the agency records of the audit of certificates and the annual audits of delegated examining units indicate that appropriate corrective action is taken to resolve cases of erroneous certification and out-of-order selection? • Does the agency have procedures for handling suitability matters?
Efficient and effective use of the Federal work force	• Was this certificate issued in a timely manner? • Is there appropriate use of automation? • Is "well-qualified" defined to provide opportunities for surplus and displaced employees? • Are CTAP/ICTAP candidates receiving proper consideration for all appropriate vacancies?
Veterans' Preference Act of 1944 (as amended) and other laws and regulations	• Were eligibles listed in the correct order, by score, veterans' preference etc.? • If there were any objections or pass over requests, were they properly handled? • Is the selection consistent with the rule of three?

Appendix I - CTAP/ICTAP Charts

Introduction

The two charts in this appendix are to be used as a quick reference for you to follow in filling positions in compliance with CTAP/ICTAP. External competitive examining is subject to ICTAP, as are other types of external placements (e.g., transfers and reinstatements). If CTAP/ICTAP clearance is done outside the Examining Office, the Examining Office must document the case file that CTAP/ICTAP requirements were met.

NOTE: These charts are not to be used exclusively as the determining factor for selection priority, please see 5 CFR 330.

CTAP Special Selection Consideration

(This chart is not to be used exclusively as the determining factor for selection priority, please see **5 CFR Part 330, subpart G**).

Question Number	Question	If YES, THEN:	If NO, THEN:
1	For CTAP Special Selection Consideration: Does the Employee meet "surplus" or "displaced" definition in 5 CFR Part 330, subpart F?	Question 2	Individual is not entitled to selection priority
2	Has the employee separated from the agency?	Individual is not entitled to selection priority	Question 3
3	Has the employee included a performance appraisal at the Fully Successful level or equivalent rating?	Question 4	Individual is not entitled to selection priority (unless modified by agency policy).
4	Is the duty station of the vacancy in the same commuting area as the employee's duty station?	Question 5	Individual is not entitled to selection priority
5	Is the grade of the vacancy at or below the employee's current grade?	Question 6	Individual is not entitled to selection priority
6	Does the vacancy offer greater promotion potential than employee's current position?	Individual is not entitled to selection priority	Question 7
7	Was the employee found to be well-qualified?	Employee is referred for selection priority	Individual is not entitled to selection priority

ICTAP Special Selection Consideration

(This chart is not to be used exclusively as the determining factor for selection priority, please see **5 CFR Part 330, subpart G**).

Question Number	Question	If YES, THEN:	If NO, THEN:
1	For ICTAP Special Selection Consideration: Does the Employee meet the definition of "displaced" in 5 CFR Part 330, subpart G).	Question 2	Individual is not entitled to selection priority
2	Has employee's ICTAP eligibility expired?	Individual is not entitled to selection priority	Question 3
3	If required by regulation, does the employee have at least a Fully Successful or equivalent rating?	Question 4	Individual is not entitled to selection priority.
4	Is the duty station of the vacancy in the same commuting area as the employee's duty station?	Question 5	Individual is not entitled to selection priority
5	Is the grade of the vacancy at or below the employee's current (or last) grade?	Question 6	Individual is not entitled to selection priority
6	Does the vacancy offer the same or less promotion potential than employee's current (or last) position?	Question 7	Individual is not entitled to selection priority
7	Was the employee found to be well-qualified?	Employee is referred for selection priority	Individual is not entitled to selection priority

Appendix J – Transmutation Tables for General Schedule Positions

Determining number of points an applicant can receive

Once the rating schedule has been developed, you have to determine the number of points an applicant can receive.

The first column in each table below represents the number of points. The second column is the transmuted rating, not including veterans' preference (VP). Use the transmutation table which begins with the number matching the maximum number of points. Applicants who meet OPM qualification requirements and any selective factors, but show no evidence of possession of any other experience, will be assigned a transmuted score of 70.

Transmutation Table for the Maximum Number of Matching Points (6)

Number of Points	Equals (=)	Transmuted Rating (not including VP)
6	=	**100**
5	=	95
4	=	90
3	=	85
2	=	80
1	=	75
0	=	70

Transmutation Table for the Maximum Number of Matching Points (7)

Number of Points	Equals (=)	Transmuted Rating (not including VP)
7	=	**100**
6	=	96
5	=	91
4	=	87
3	=	83
2	=	79
1	=	74
0	=	70

Transmutation Table for the Maximum Number of Matching Points (8)

Number of Points	Equals (=)	Transmuted Rating (not including VP)
8	=	**100**
7	=	96
6	=	93
5	=	89
4	=	85
3	=	81
2	=	78
1	=	74
0	=	70

Transmutation Table for the Maximum Number of Matching Points (9)

Number of Points	Equals (=)	Transmuted Rating (not including VP)
9	=	**100**
8	=	97
7	=	93
6	=	90
5	=	87
4	=	83
3	=	80
2	=	77
1	=	73
0	=	70

Transmutation Table for the Maximum Number of Matching Points (10)

Number of Points	Equals (=)	Transmuted Rating (not including VP)
10	=	**100**
9	=	97
8	=	94
7	=	91
6	=	88
5	=	85
4	=	82
3	=	79
2	=	76
1	=	73
0	=	70

Transmutation Table for the Maximum Number of Matching Points (11)

Number of Points	Equals (=)	Transmuted Rating (not including VP)
11	=	**100**
10	=	97
9	=	95
8	=	92
7	=	89
6	=	86
5	=	84
4	=	81
3	=	78
2	=	75
1	=	73
0	=	70

Transmutation Table for the Maximum Number of Matching Points (12)

Number of Points	Equals (=)	Transmuted Rating (not including VP)
12	=	**100**
11	=	98
10	=	95
9	=	93
8	=	90
7	=	88
6	=	85
5	=	83
4	=	80
3	=	78
2	=	75
1	=	73
0	=	70

Transmutation Table for the Maximum Number of Matching Points (13)

Number of Points	Equals (=)	Transmuted Rating (not including VP)
13	=	**100**
12	=	98
11	=	95
10	=	93
9	=	91
8	=	88
7	=	86
6	=	84
5	=	82
4	=	79
3	=	77
2	=	75
1	=	72
0	=	70

Transmutation Table for the Maximum Number of Matching Points (14)

Number of Points	Equals (=)	Transmuted Rating (not including VP)
14	=	**100**
13	=	98
12	=	96
11	=	94
10	=	91
9	=	89
8	=	87
7	=	85
6	=	83
5	=	81
4	=	79
3	=	76
2	=	74
1	=	72
0	=	70

Transmutation Table for the Maximum Number of Matching Points (15)

Number of Points	Equals (=)	Transmuted Rating (not including VP)
15	=	**100**
14	=	98
13	=	96
12	=	94
11	=	92
10	=	90
9	=	88
8	=	86
7	=	84
6	=	82
5	=	80
4	=	78
3	=	76
2	=	74
1	=	72
0	=	70

Transmutation Table for the Maximum Number of Matching Points (16)

Number of Points	Equals (=)	Transmuted Rating (not including VP)
16	=	**100**
15	=	98
14	=	96
13	=	94
12	=	93
11	=	91
10	=	89
9	=	87
8	=	85
7	=	83
6	=	81
5	=	79
4	=	78
3	=	76
2	=	74
1	=	72
0	=	70

Transmutation Table for the Maximum Number of Matching Points (17)

Number of Points	Equals (=)	Transmuted Rating (not including VP)
17	=	**100**
16	=	98
15	=	96
14	=	95
13	=	93
12	=	91
11	=	89
10	=	88
9	=	86
8	=	84
7	=	82
6	=	81
5	=	79
4	=	77
3	=	75
2	=	74
1	=	72
0	=	70

Transmutation Table for the Maximum Number of Matching Points (18)

Number of Points	Equals (=)	Transmuted Rating (not including VP)
18	=	**100**
17	=	98
16	=	97
15	=	95
14	=	93
13	=	92
12	=	90
11	=	88
10	=	87
9	=	85
8	=	83
7	=	82
6	=	80
5	=	78
4	=	77
3	=	75
2	=	73
1	=	72
0	=	70

Transmutation Table for the Maximum Number of Matching Points (19)

Number of Points	Equals (=)	Transmuted Rating (not including VP)
19	=	**100**
18	=	98
17	=	97
16	=	95
15	=	94
14	=	92
13	=	91
12	=	89
11	=	87
10	=	86
9	=	84
8	=	83
7	=	81
6	=	79
5	=	78
4	=	76
3	=	75
2	=	73
1	=	72
0	=	70

Transmutation Table for the Maximum Number of Matching Points (20)

Number of Points	Equals (=)	Transmuted Rating (not including VP)
20	=	**100**
19	=	99
18	=	97
17	=	96
16	=	94
15	=	93
14	=	91
13	=	90
12	=	88
11	=	87
10	=	85
9	=	84
8	=	82
7	=	81
6	=	79
5	=	78
4	=	76
3	=	75
2	=	73
1	=	72
0	=	70

Transmutation Table for the Maximum Number of Matching Points (21)

Number of Points	Equals (=)	Transmuted Rating (not including VP)
21	=	**100**
20	=	99
19	=	97
18	=	96
17	=	94
16	=	93
15	=	91
14	=	90
13	=	89
12	=	87
11	=	86
10	=	84
9	=	83
8	=	81
7	=	80
6	=	79
5	=	77
4	=	76
3	=	74
2	=	73
1	=	71
0	=	70

Transmutation Table for the Maximum Number of Matching Points (22)

Number of Points	Equals (=)	Transmuted Rating (not including VP)
22	=	**100**
21	=	99
20	=	97
19	=	96
18	=	95
17	=	93
16	=	92
15	=	90
14	=	89
13	=	88
12	=	86
11	=	85
10	=	84
9	=	82
8	=	81
7	=	80
6	=	78
5	=	77
4	=	75
3	=	74
2	=	73
1	=	71
0	=	70

Transmutation Table for the Maximum Number of Matching Points (23)

Number of Points	Equals (=)	Transmuted Rating (not including VP)
23	=	100
22	=	99
21	=	97
20	=	96
19	=	95
18	=	93
17	=	92
16	=	91
15	=	90
14	=	88
13	=	87
12	=	86
11	=	84
10	=	83
9	=	82
8	=	80
7	=	79
6	=	78
5	=	77
4	=	75
3	=	74
2	=	73
1	=	71
0	=	70

Transmutation Table for the Maximum Number of Matching Points (24)

Number of Points	Equals (=)	Transmuted Rating (not including VP)
24	=	**100**
23	=	99
22	=	98
21	=	96
20	=	95
19	=	94
18	=	93
17	=	91
16	=	90
15	=	89
14	=	88
13	=	86
12	=	85
11	=	84
10	=	83
9	=	81
8	=	80
7	=	79
6	=	78
5	=	76
4	=	75
3	=	74
2	=	73
1	=	71
0	=	70

Transmutation Table for the Maximum Number of Matching Points (25)

Number of Points	Equals (=)	Transmuted Rating (not including VP)
25	=	**100**
24	=	99
23	=	98
22	=	96
21	=	95
20	=	94
19	=	93
18	=	92
17	=	90
16	=	89
15	=	88
14	=	87
13	=	86
12	=	84
11	=	83
10	=	82
9	=	81
8	=	80
7	=	78
6	=	77
5	=	76
4	=	75
3	=	74
2	=	72
1	=	71
0	=	70

Transmutation Table for the Maximum Number of Matching Points (26)

Number of Points	Equals (=)	Transmuted Rating (not including VP)
26	=	**100**
25	=	99
24	=	98
23	=	97
22	=	95
21	=	94
20	=	93
19	=	92
18	=	91
17	=	90
16	=	88
15	=	87
14	=	86
13	=	85
12	=	84
11	=	83
10	=	82
9	=	80
8	=	79
7	=	78
6	=	77
5	=	76
4	=	75
3	=	73
2	=	72
1	=	71
0	=	70

Transmutation Table for the Maximum Number of Matching Points (27)

Number of Points	Equals (=)	Transmuted Rating (not including VP)
27	=	**100**
26	=	99
25	=	98
24	=	97
23	=	96
22	=	94
21	=	93
20	=	92
19	=	91
18	=	90
17	=	89
16	=	88
15	=	87
14	=	86
13	=	84
12	=	83
11	=	82
10	=	81
9	=	80
8	=	79
7	=	78
6	=	77
5	=	76
4	=	74
3	=	73
2	=	72
1	=	71
0	=	70

Transmutation Table for the Maximum Number of Matching Points (28)

Number of Points	Equals (=)	Transmuted Rating (not including VP)
28	=	**100**
27	=	99
26	=	98
25	=	97
24	=	96
23	=	95
22	=	94
21	=	93
20	=	91
19	=	90
18	=	89
17	=	88
16	=	87
15	=	86
14	=	85
13	=	84
12	=	83
11	=	82
10	=	81
9	=	80
8	=	79
7	=	78
6	=	76
5	=	75
4	=	74
3	=	73
2	=	72
1	=	71
0	=	70

Transmutation Table for the Maximum Number of Matching Points (29)

Number of Points	Equals (=)	Transmuted Rating (not including VP)
29	=	**100**
28	=	99
27	=	98
26	=	97
25	=	96
24	=	95
23	=	94
22	=	93
21	=	92
20	=	91
19	=	90
18	=	89
17	=	88
16	=	87
15	=	86
14	=	84
13	=	83
12	=	82
11	=	81
10	=	80
9	=	79
8	=	78
7	=	77
6	=	76
5	=	75
4	=	74
3	=	73
2	=	72
1	=	71
0	=	70

Transmutation Table for the Maximum Number of Matching Points
(30)

Number of Points	Equals (=)	Transmuted Rating (not including VP)
30	=	**100**
29	=	99
28	=	98
27	=	97
26	=	96
25	=	95
24	=	94
23	=	93
22	=	92
21	=	91
20	=	90
19	=	89
18	=	88
17	=	87
16	=	86
15	=	85
14	=	84
13	=	83
12	=	82
11	=	81
10	=	80
9	=	79
8	=	78
7	=	77
6	=	76
5	=	75
4	=	74
3	=	73
2	=	72
1	=	71
0	=	70

Appendix K - Professional and Scientific Positions

Below is the list of professional and scientific positions.

Series	Position Titles
0020	Community Planning
0060	Chaplain
0095	Foreign Law Specialist
0101	Social Science
0110	Economist
0130	Foreign Affairs
0131	International Relations
0135	Foreign Agricultural Affairs
0140	Manpower Research & Analysis
0150	Geography
0170	History
0180	Psychology
0184	Sociology
0185	Social Work
0190	General Anthropology
0193	Archeology
0401	General Biological Science
0403	Microbiology
0405	Pharmacology
0406	Agricultural Extension
0408	Ecology
0410	Zoology
0413	Physiology
0414	Entomology
0415	Toxicology
0430	Botany
0434	Plan Pathology
0435	Plant Physiology
0436	Plant Protection and Quarantine
0437	Horticulture
0440	Genetics
0454	Range Conservation
0457	Soil Conservation
0460	Forestry
0470	Soil Science
0471	Agronomy
0475	Agricultural Management (Cancelled)
0480	General Fish and Wildlife Administration
0482	Fishery Biology
0485	Wildlife Refuge Management
0486	Wildlife Biology

Series	Position Titles
0487	Animal Science
0493	Home Economics
0510	Accounting
0511	Auditing
0512	Internal Revenue Agent
0601	General Health Science
0602	Medical Officer
0610	Nurse
0630	Dietitian & Nutritionist
0631	Occupational Therapist
0633	Physical Therapist
0635	Corrective Therapist
0637	Manual Arts Therapist
0638	Recreation/Creative Arts Therapist
0639	Educational Therapist
0644	Medical Technologist
0660	Pharmacist
0662	Optometrist
0665	Speech Pathology & Audiology
0668	Podiatrist
0680	Dental Officer
0690	Industrial Hygiene
0696	Consumer Safety
0701	Veterinary Medical Science
0801	General Engineering
0803	Safety Engineering
0804	Fire Prevention Engineering
0806	Materials Engineering
0807	Landscape Architecture
0808	Architecture
0810	Civil Engineering
0819	Environmental Engineering
0830	Mechanical Engineering
0840	Nuclear Engineering
0850	Electrical Engineering
0854	Computer Engineering
0855	Electronic Engineering
0858	Biomedical Engineering
0861	Aerospace Engineering
0871	Naval Architecture
0880	Mining Engineering
0881	Petroleum Engineering
0890	Agricultural Engineering
0892	Ceramic Engineering
0893	Chemical Engineering
0894	Welding Engineering
0896	Industrial Engineering
0904	Law Clerk

Series	Position Titles
0905	General Attorney
1015	Museum Curator
1102	Contracting*
1220	Patent Administration
1221	Patent Advisor
1222	Patent Attorney
1223	Patent Classifying
1224	Patent Examining
1226	Design Patent Examining
1301	General Physical Science
1306	Health Physics
1310	Physics
1313	Geophysics
1315	Hydrology
1320	Chemistry
1321	Metallurgy
1330	Astronomy & Space Science
1340	Meteorology
1350	Geology
1360	Oceanography
1370	Cartography
1372	Geodesy
1373	Land Surveying
1380	Forest Products Technology
1382	Food Technology
1384	Textile Technology
1386	Photographic Technology
1410	Librarian
1420	Archivist
1510	Actuary
1515	Operations Research
1520	Mathematics
1529	Mathematical Statistician
1530	Statistician
1540	Cryptography
1550	Computer Science
1701	General Education & Training
1710	Educational and Vocational Training
1720	Education Program
1725	Public Health Educator
1730	Education Research
1740	Education Services
1750	Instrumental Systems

*Note: 10-point compensably disabled veterans continue to float at grade GS-9 and above in the GS-1102 occupation.

Appendix L - Random Referral Instructions

When to use random referrals

The random referral procedure is used when all job-related methods for breaking ties have been exhausted. It is used to rank tied eligibles by matching the last digit of the identification number such as the Social Security Number, against a randomly chosen number sequence which is changed daily.

What is a random number list?

A Random Number List is used (see page L-5) to find the starting point for the number sequence used to break ties on a certain day. There is a space on the list opposite the number to enter the date certificates or supplemental certificates were issued using that number as a starting point for breaking ties.

The first day your local OPM Service Center uses the list, the starting point would be "0," because "0" is the first number of this list; on the second day "3," etc. Once the starting point has been determined, the remainder of the sequence follows in logical numerical order. In the example where "0" is the first number, the sequence would be 0123456789. If "3" were the first number, the sequence would be 3456789012.

Basic rule to random number lists

The basic rule is that within a tied-rating group, the last digits of the identification numbers involved are compared to the 10-number sequence, based on the number selected from the Random Number List, and eligibles are certified in the order of the sequence.

Example 1: Assume that this is the 10th day your local OPM Service Center has used the random referral procedure for certification. Opposite the 10th number, "9," the Staffing Clerk writes in the date. Because "9" is the first number in the random number sequence, the entire sequence used to break ties that day is **9012345678** and the tied eligibles and order of certification will be:

Tied Eligibles	Order of Certification
970863	415239
415239	067112
954416	970863
067112	954416

All tied eligibles with applicant numbers ending in 9 would be certified first, those ending in 0, second, those ending in 1, third, etc.

Special note

Dates entered in the **Random Number List** should be only those dates on which at least one certificate was issued. Thus, for example, if a certificate was issued on October 9, 1995, and the next one was not issued until October 13, 1995, those dates would follow in sequence on the List. Intervening dates of the 10th, 11th, and 12th would not be written in.

Example 2:

If more than one applicant number in a tied rating group ends in the same digit, the same procedure is applied to the next to the last digit and so on until the necessary ties are broken. Each digit (next to the last, second to the last, etc.) is compared to the first number in the sequence, and so on until all necessary eligibles are ranked. The random number sequence is **9012345678** and the tied eligibles and order of certification for this example will be:

Tied Eligibles	Order of Certification
431800	872149
894671	914000
914000	505000
872149	431800
934800	934800
505000	391741
391741	894671
371112	371112

In this example, 9 is the first number in the random sequence; therefore, any identification number ending in 9 goes first. The next number is 0. There are four identification numbers in the example that end in 0, which means that the next to the last digit in the identification numbers will be used to rank the eligibles. When a new digit in the identification number must be used for tie-breaking, the Staffing Clerk starts at the beginning of the random number sequence again (i.e., 9's first, 0's second, 1's third, etc.) Three identification numbers in the example have a next-to-last digit of 0, so that next-to-last digit must be used for breaking ties. When all identification numbers ending in 0 have been ranked, all those ending in 1 are ranked. Continue the procedure until enough eligibles have been ranked to fill the requests.

Maintaining random lists

Each Staffing Clerk may maintain one **Random Number List** for all certificates for which he/she is responsible, or the office may wish to maintain one list to be used by the entire office. Whichever procedure is followed, a new random number sequence is used for each day that certificates are issued. When all the numbers on the **Random Number List** have been used, start over at the beginning of the list.

Automated competitor inventory random numbers are system-generated, and the manual list should not be used.

How to handle random lists

Your office may make copies of the list for internal use, but the random number material is to be treated as **confidential** and should not be released to agencies or the general public (see next page for Random Number List).

Random Number List

Date	Number	Date	Number	Date	Number	Date	Number	Date	Number
	0		0		1		2		8
	3		4		5		7		2
	1		3		6		3		9
	6		7		3		4		7
	2		9		2		9		4
	4		1		8		8		0
	8		5		9		6		1
	7		6		0		1		3
	5		2		4		5		5
	9		8		7		0		6
	7		2		1		6		7
	3		8		5		2		4
	2		3		7		0		5
	6		0		3		5		1
	0		7		4		8		9
	8		6		8		4		3
	1		1		2		9		2
	5		5		6		7		0
	9		4		9		3		8
	4		9		0		1		4
	3		5		5		9		4
	6		4		9		2		7
	7		7		4		0		9
	9		2		1		4		6
	8		9		8		8		5
	2		3		3		6		2
	4		8		0		3		3
	1		6		7		7		1
	0		1		2		1		0
	5		0		6		5		8
	2		7		0		6		3
	7		5		9		5		5
	8		3		5		0		0
	5		9		7		7		6
	6		1		1		9		1
	4		8		2		3		2
	3		6		8		4		4
	1		2		3		8		8
	9		4		6		2		7
	0		0		4		1		9

*From statistical Analysis for Managerial Decisions, John C.G. Boot and Edwin B. Cox, 1970.

Appendix M - Instructions for Completing the Delegated Examining Quarterly Workload Report Form

Introduction

Under delegated examining with OPM, you agreed to report your delegated examining activities on a quarterly basis. The Delegated Examining Quarterly Workload Report helps you to meet this requirement. Instructions for completing the report form are below.

When report is due

This report is **due by the 15th of the month following the end of the reporting quarter** (i.e., January 15, April 15, July 15, and October 15). If your delegated examining unit (DEU) did not have any delegated examining activities for the quarter, you must still submit a negative report.

You must enter your report into OPM's Delegated Examining Information System (DEIS) at https://deis.opm.gov. To access this system, you will need a user name and password. If you do not have a user name or password DEIS, please contact the Center for Merit System Accountability at 202-606-1453 or 202-606-2538.

Materials needed for completing report

When completing the Quarterly Workload Reporting form, found at the end of this appendix, count all applications and selections, including those for temporary and term appointment, that were processed under delegated examining. Count only the workload actually produced by your DEU, including work accomplished <u>for</u> another Federal agency.

Do not include:

- Applications and selections that occurred under either Outside-the-Register hiring authority or noncompetitive authority;
- Applications collected or selections made under the Outstanding Scholar hiring authority; or
- Work produced by OPM under a reimbursable contract or by another Federal agency.

Completing the quarterly workload reporting form

These instructions will help you complete the Quarterly Workload Reporting form. You will need to provide:

Line #	Information to be provided…
	**Completing Quarterly Workload Reporting Form**

Line #	Information to be provided…
	Delegated Examining Unit Identification Number (DEUIDNO). A DEUIDNO is assigned to each delegated examining office. This number is used to identify the examining office in OPM's automated tracking system. If you know your DEUIDNO, please complete. If you do not know your DEUIDNO, you can either leave this line blank or contact your local OPM Service Center.
1	**Name and Location of Examining Office** Please provide your agency/subagency name and address.
2	**Contact Person Preparing Report** Please provide the name of your staff member responsible for completing this report.
3	**Phone Number** Please provide the telephone number where the contact person can be reached.
4	**FY and Quarter** Please indicate the fiscal year and quarter in which the delegated examining work was completed.
5	**Number of applications processed.** Count the total number of applications, eligibles and ineligibles, processed during the reporting quarter.
6	**Number of selections made.** Count the total number of selections made from certificates audited during the reporting quarter. How many selections were made on the audited certificates shown on **Line 8**?
7	**Number of preference eligibles selected.** Count the total number of preference eligibles selected from the number of selections reported on **Line 6**. How many of the selectees on **Line 6** were preference eligibles.
8	**Number of certificates audited.** Count the total number of certificates audited during the reporting quarter. These are certificates that were audited (returned by the selecting official and closed-out by the Examining Office) during the quarter, rather than the number of certificates that were issued.
	**Lines 9-16 Refer to Certificates Audited During the Reporting Quarter**

Line #	Information to be provided…
9	**Number of certificates in (8), which had preference eligibles at the top.** Total number of audited certificates on **Line 8,** which had preference eligible(s) at the top of the list. "At the top" refers to the first three eligibles listed on a certificate of eligibles.
10	**Number of certificates in (9), which were used.** Total number of audited certificates on **Line 9**, which had one or more selections, reported.
11	**Number of certificates in (9), which were unused.** Total number of audited certificates on **Line 9** in which no selection was made.
	**NOTE: The numbers reported on Line 10 and Line 11 must equal Line 9.**
12	**Number of certificates in (11) unused because of CTAP/ICTAP referral.** Total number of audited certificates on **Line 11** in which the selecting official reported making no selection because of CTAP/ICTAP referral(s).

	Completing Quarterly Workload Reporting Form
13	**Number of certificates in (8) which preference eligibles were <u>not</u> at the top.** Total number of audited certificates on Line 8 in which no preference eligible(s) was within the first three eligibles on the list. This includes all the remaining certificates audited during the reporting quarter not reported on **Line 9**.
	NOTE: The numbers reported on Line 9 and Line 13 must equal Line 8.
14	**Number of certificates in (13) which were used.** Total number of audited certificates on Line 13 which had one or more selections reported.
15	**Number of certificates in (13) which were unused.** Total number of audited certificates on Line 13 which no selection was made.
	NOTE: The numbers reported on Line 14 and Line 15 must equal Line 13.
	Lines 9-16 Refer to Certificates Audited During the Reporting Quarter
16	**Number of certificates in (15) above unused because of CTAP/ICTAP referral.** Total number of audited certificates on Line 11 in which the selecting official reported making no selection because of CTAP/ICTAP referral(s).
17	**Internal self-evaluation of delegated examining operations.** Fill in the date your annual internal delegated examining operations self-evaluation was completed. Complete Line 17 only for the fiscal quarter during which the self-evaluation was completed.

When To Use this Form

Your Delegated Examining Office should make copies of this form in order to provide workload information to your local OPM Service Centers. Reports cover examining activity for the previous fiscal quarter and are due to OPM by the 15 of the month following the end of the quarter (Example: The report for the 1st quarter, October 1 through December 31, will be due on January 15).

What to include in Report

Count only workload items, including those for temporary and term appointments that were processed under your delegated examining authority. Do not include workload that occurred outside-the-register hiring authority, merit promotion or other noncompetitive authority, or excepted service-hiring procedures.

Count only the workload actually produced by your Examining Office, including work accomplished for another Federal agency. Do not count work produced by OPM under a reimbursable contract, or by another Federal agency.

Delegated Examining Offices are responsible for collecting the reasons for not using the certificates they issue, analyzing the reasons provided, and looking for trends of non-use.

DEUIDNO: ✱✱✱✱✱✱✱✱✱✱✱✱✱✱✱

(1) Name and Location of Examining Office_____

(2) Contact Person Preparing Report_____

(3) Phone Number_____

(4) FY_____ Quarter_____

(5) Number of applications processed: _____

(6) Number of selections made: _____

(7) Number of preference eligibles selected: _____

(8) Number of certificates audited[1]: _____

    (9) No. of certificates in (8) which had preference eligibles at the top:_____

    (10) No. of certificates in (9) which were used:_____

    (11) No. of certificates in (9) which were unused:_____

    (12) No. of certificates in (11) unused because of CTAP and ICTAP referral:_____

    (13) No. of certificates in (8) which preference eligibles were not at the top:_____

    (14) No. of certificates in (13) which were used:_____

    (15) No. of certificates in (13) which were unused:_____

    (16) No. of certificates in (15) above unused because of CTAP/ICTAP referral:_____

(17)[2] We certify that an internal self-evaluation of our delegated examining operations was completed on
_____
(Enter date)

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[1] Count certificates that were audited (returned by the selecting official and closed-out by the EO) during the quarter, rather than the number of certificates that were issued.
[2] Complete Line 17 only for the fiscal quarter during which the self-evaluation was completed.

Appendix N - Oversight Review Guide

Oversight review guide

This guide can be used by your agency to conduct its internal review or for your delegated examining office to prepare for an OPM review. Focus is on four major categories described as:

I.   Organization and Jurisdiction
II.   Recruitment
III.   Application Processing
IV.   Certification/Selection

Category	Questions
Organization and Jurisdiction	• Identify examining coverage: position titles, grades, and geographic jurisdiction. • If the agency has published procedures covering DE operations, are they in compliance with legislation, OPM regulations and instructions? • Is the agency furnishing the quarterly reports on selections and applications processed as required by the delegated examining agreement? • Is the agency adhering to the records retention/disposal schedule in accordance with OPM requirements? • Is competitive examining only being conducted by installation staff trained and certified by an OPM Services Branch? • Has the installation implemented its internal accountability system as required by the delegation agreement? • Did the installation conduct the required annual review of DEO operations utilizing non-DEO staff? Did the report of the annual review reflect significant deficiencies in operations? Was a copy of the quarterly workload report sent to the local OPM Services Branch?

Category	Questions
Recruitment	• Are jobs publicized through OPM's USAJOBS?
	• Does the public notice indicate: specific job(s), and qualifications required, including experience, education, selective and/or quality ranking factors?
	• Is there reasonable opportunity to compete based on: length of open periods, areas of publicity, and use of productive recruitment sources?
	• Are application procedures clear regarding qualifications required, bases for rating, and identification of application forms and filing address?
	• Do vacancy announcements contain required notifications to CTAP/ICTAP eligibles and definition of well-qualified?
	• Are replies to inquiries accurate, responsive, and timely (written and verbal)?
	• Is recruitment appropriately targeted (toward under-represented groups, veterans)?
	• Does recruitment produce a sufficient number of high quality applicants?

Category	Questions
Application processing	• Are applications from persons entitled to file late applications processed appropriately? • Are KSAs and crediting plans based on job requirements, and appropriate to the level of competition? Are KSAs and crediting plans consistently applied? • Has the agency established a formal rating reconsideration procedure? If so, review the procedure and the levels of review provided. • Review a sampling of rated and processed applications (eligible and ineligible). Is the date of receipt (or postmark) indicated? Does application meet criteria for receipt (exam open)? Is the rating correct? Was veterans' preference correctly awarded and recorded? Were reconsiderations processed according to procedures/documented/applicant notified? • How are incomplete applications treated? Are all incomplete applications processed the same? • Is there evidence of non-merit factors such as unwarranted consideration of name requests, conversions of temporary and/or excepted employees without open competition, etc.? • Is there documentation supporting determinations that an otherwise eligible CTAP/ICTAP candidate is not well-qualified? • Are court approved rating instruments (either the Individual Achievement Record (IAR) or the IAR with the appropriate written test) being used to fill positions that are subject to the provisions of the *Luevano* Consent Decree? • Is the agency requesting applicants for positions that are subject to the provisions of the *Luevano* Consent Decree complete OPM Form 1386B. **Note:** This form is voluntary on the part of the applicant.

Category	Questions
Certification and selection	• Review a sampling of audited certificates for technical accuracy. • Were eligibles selected from the appropriate register for certification?[3] • Were eligibles listed in the correct order, by score, veterans' preference, etc.? • Were objections or passover requests, if any, handled properly? • Is the selection within the "rule of three"? • Does the selection meet CTAP/ICTAP regulatory requirements? • Assess whether veterans are receiving bona fide consideration (review patterns of non-use of certificates and objections/passovers). • Are certification procedures uniform for all eligibles? • Were applicants who were not selected appropriately returned to the register?[1] (Assess whether register eligibles lose consideration due to untimely or inaccurate return of eligibles to registers). • Were returned certificates audited within three workdays of their return from selecting officials? • Are changes requested by register eligibles made quickly and accurately?[1] (Assess whether requested changes are delayed in such a manner that applicants lose consideration). • Are selecting officials satisfied with the quality and timeliness of certificates?

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[3] Register based examining only.

Appendix O - Assessing Applicants with Disabilities

Introduction

Nearly 10 percent of working-age adults have a disability affecting their capacity to see, hear, walk, or perform other basic functions of life. Given the prevalence of disabilities, it is likely that anyone involved with selection assessments will at some point face the challenge of how best to administer an assessment to an individual with a disability. This appendix is intended to provide assistance in meeting this challenge.

Federal agencies are required to provide assessment accommodations to applicants with disabilities to the extent such accommodations are reasonable, consistent with the nature and purpose of the examination, and matched to the applicant's disability. Those developing, administering, and using assessment procedures need to be aware of the legal framework and basic principles involved in assessing individuals with disabilities.

The challenges can be substantial. Professional judgment is often required when determining the type of accommodations that may be appropriate for a given assessment procedure. Assessment accommodations are deemed appropriate when they allow applicants to demonstrate their qualifications without compromising the usefulness or meaning of assessment scores.

This appendix does not provide guidance on administering or managing a reasonable accommodation program. As required by Executive Order 13164, agencies are responsible for establishing their own administrative guidelines for processing reasonable accommodation requests. These may include procedures for initiating requests, assigning decision-making authority to agency staff, ensuring confidentiality of disability information, and setting time limits for processing requests. Agencies have some flexibility in developing a process that works for them, but clearly written policies and procedures should be in place and made available to all applicants.

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Since 1973, applicant examining procedures in the Federal Government have been designed to meet the requirements of the Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C. 791). In 1992, the Rehabilitation Act was amended to apply the standards established under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to Federal employment. The Rehabilitation Act and accompanying regulations define a person with a disability as someone with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. Major life activities are defined as such fundamental actions as seeing, hearing, speaking, walking, breathing, and learning.

The Rehabilitation Act requires agencies to provide reasonable and necessary assessment accommodations to individuals with disabilities. In cases where the condition is not

readily visible, agencies may ask for supporting documentation to validate that an applicant is covered under the Rehabilitation Act as an individual with a disability.

Unless an applicant can establish that a condition substantially impairs a major life activity, that applicant will not be entitled to an accommodation in the assessment process. For additional information on the Rehabilitation Act, refer to the "Laws and Executive Orders" section in the "HR Professionals" chapter at the following Office of Personnel Management (OPM) website (http://www.opm.gov/disability), "Federal Employment of People with Disabilities." Additional information on reasonable accommodation can be found at the same OPM website under the section on "Reasonable Accommodation."

Purpose of an assessment accommodation

An assessment accommodation is defined as a change in how an assessment is presented or how the applicant responds. Accommodations may include changes in the presentation format, response format, assessment setting, timing, or scheduling. The purpose of an assessment accommodation is to provide equal access to the examination process for applicants with disabilities. Accommodations are intended to lessen the impact of the applicant's functional limitation on the assessment process without:

- Fundamentally modifying the nature of the examination;
- Compromising the security, validity, or reliability of the examination;
- Providing an unfair advantage to the applicant with the disability; or
- Imposing an undue hardship on the agency.

While providing accommodations will presumably enable applicants to better demonstrate their mastery of job-related competencies/knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs), assessment accommodations are not a guarantee of improved performance, test completion, or a passing score.

Maintaining the competitive nature of the assessment process

Examinations are given to measure job-related competencies/KSAs. The resulting ratings or numeric scores are used to compare the performance of individual competitors for purposes of making employment decisions. Care must be taken to ensure that accommodations do not affect an individual's score to the extent that it cannot be compared meaningfully to the scores of other competitors.

To maintain competitive equity for all applicants, accommodations should be designed so that individuals with disabilities are placed neither at an advantage nor disadvantage relative to other competitors. Therefore, any proposed change to the assessment process that may raise questions about the interpretability of results should be reviewed by an employment testing expert before implementation.

Preserving assessment integrity

Written, oral, performance, and other types of assessment procedures are designed to measure the competencies/KSAs needed to learn or perform a job. Therefore, the examination or method of administration should not be changed if the proposed accommodation fundamentally modifies what is being assessed. If at all possible, avoid assessment procedures requiring the use of impaired mental, sensory, manual, or speaking skills, unless the procedures are intended to measure those very skills. This is provided for in relevant statutory guidance:

> "Thus, an employer could require that an applicant with dyslexia take a written test for a particular job if the ability to read is the skill the test is designed to measure. Similarly, an employer could require that an applicant complete a test within established time frames if speed were one of the skills for which the applicant was being tested." (**29 CFR 1630.16**)

A modified assessment procedure may no longer test the same competency it was designed to measure or the outcome it was designed to predict. For example, time extensions are frequently proposed as testing accommodations. To the extent that the assessment is intended to measure speed of performance (e.g., a typing test), allowing more time is not appropriate. Such an accommodation would invalidate the results by modifying what the test was originally designed to measure.

Developing an assessment accommodation

Assessment accommodations should be determined on a case-by-case basis. When developing assessment accommodations, it is important to keep in mind that applicants with the same type of disability may differ greatly in their capabilities and specific need for accommodation. For example, not all applicants with visual impairments would be effectively accommodated by providing materials in Braille format. Depending on individual circumstances, some applicants may require a magnification device while others may need special lighting or a reader. Appropriate accommodations ensure that applicants are assessed according to individual needs rather than presumed group characteristics. Therefore, each request should be evaluated on its own merits using an individualized approach.

The primary concern in determining the appropriateness of a modified assessment procedure is whether the proposed change compromises the accurate assessment of an applicant's job qualifications. For example, using a scribe to record answers (as required by a written test) may be a reasonable accommodation for an applicant with cerebral palsy. On the other hand, having a test read aloud that was designed to assess reading comprehension may be an unreasonable request. The goal is to provide applicants with disabilities an equal opportunity to demonstrate their job-related competencies/KSAs without undermining the validity or competitive equity of the assessment process.

Applicant responsibility

As the person being assessed, the applicant has an essential role to play in the process of requesting an assessment accommodation. For example, applicants are responsible for:

- informing the agency that they need a change or adjustment to the assessment process because of a medical condition;
- providing documentation in support of the need for an assessment accommodation, if requested;
- providing up-to-date information concerning the nature and extent of the disability sufficient to determine the assessment accommodations required; and
- cooperating with the agency in the process of developing appropriate accommodations for the assessment situation.

What constitutes sufficient information may depend on the type of disability. For example, supporting documentation is not necessary when the applicant has an observable, physical disability (e.g., loss of a limb). On the other hand, documentation may be requested for hidden disabilities such as learning or psychiatric disorders or other cases where the need for accommodation is not obvious. For more information, refer to your agency's specific instructions to applicants on how to request a reasonable accommodation in the application and assessment process.

Agency responsibility

Agencies are responsible for safeguarding the competitive equity and validity of the assessment process while at the same time providing reasonable accommodation to qualified applicants with known disabilities. Once an applicant initiates a request, the agency should gain the individual's participation in developing an appropriate accommodation. In cases where the competitive nature and validity of an assessment is not likely to be affected (e.g., use of a magnification device), agency test administrators can work out what accommodation, if any, should be provided.

Many disabilities require only simple accommodations. For example, an individual in a wheelchair may only need adequate access to the test room and a table that is the correct height. Applicants with attention disorders may need to be assessed in a distraction-free environment.

When there is some question as to whether providing a requested accommodation would preclude the valid assessment of the applicant's qualifications, you may want to consult with an employment testing expert for final determination. Once you have become aware of an applicant's desire for an assessment accommodation:

- Review the documentation submitted by the applicant;
- Discuss the assessment process with the applicant to ensure that the applicant knows what is required;

- Obtain clarification or additional documentation from the applicant as needed, consider possible changes to how the assessment is presented or how the applicant responds, and decide which accommodation to implement;
- Consult with an employment testing expert if there is some question as to whether the accommodation might affect the competitive nature or validity of the examination;
- Offer an accommodation to the applicant if there is little risk of undermining assessment validity or providing an undue advantage;
- Document the rejection and the reasons for the rejection if the applicant does not accept the accommodations that can be reasonably granted or implemented; and
- Refer the case to the agency test control officer if an assessment accommodation cannot be determined after further consulting with the applicant.

Refer to your agency's written policies for any additional responsibilities related to processing reasonable accommodation requests.

Documentation

Where the disability is not readily visible, you may ask applicants requesting reasonable accommodations to provide appropriate documentation of the disability and specify the extent to which the standard assessment procedures need to be modified. Documentation should be sufficient to establish that the applicant does in fact have a disability as defined by Federal law and that the disability interferes with the valid measurement of the competency/KSA areas covered by the assessment procedure. Keep in mind that the law's definition of a disability differs from a clinical diagnosis. The Rehabilitation Act is intended to cover only those disabilities that *substantially* limit a major life activity. The law's definition is based on a higher standard than a mere diagnosis of impairment.

It is important to recognize that the effects of some disabilities can vary over time (e.g., psychiatric disorders, learning disabilities). If the documentation does not address the individual's *current* level of functioning and need for accommodation, then an update may be warranted. For example, a childhood diagnosis of attention deficit disorder would usually not constitute acceptable documentation if the individual applies for an assessment accommodation as an adult. You should provide guidance to applicants on what documentation, if any, is needed. Relevant documentation may include:

- Information on how the disability would affect performance during the assessment process (i.e., the specific tasks or functions affected by the disability);
- The specific assessment accommodation the applicant is requesting; and
- Supporting documentation from a qualified professional who has training and experience related to the disability of the applicant.

When reviewing the documentation, make sure that the requested accommodation is logically related to the specific functional limitations of the applicant. For example, requesting extra time on a reading comprehension test may not be a reasonable accommodation for an applicant with a math disorder.

Getting help with documentation

Professional groups have developed guidelines with uniform standards for documenting some of the more common disorders that require assessment accommodations. For example, the *Guidelines for Documentation of a Learning Disability in Adolescents and Adults* were developed by the Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD) and are available at the following website: http://www.ldonline.org. The *Guidelines for Documentation of Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder in Adolescents and Adults* were developed by the Consortium on ADHD Documentation and are available at the following website: http://www.act.org/aap/disab. These guidelines have been widely adopted by employers and testing organizations to evaluate the adequacy of documentation used to support the existence of cognitive disabilities.

Given the complexities of disability documentation and the many misconceptions about the definition of disability under the Rehabilitation Act, it is often useful to consult with employment testing and disability experts when reviewing and interpreting such documentation.

Accommodations with little or no impact

Some accommodations may be made by test administrators without consulting an employment testing expert if the changes do not affect the competitive nature or validity of the assessment process. The following types of accommodations can usually be granted and implemented by agency test administrators:

Accessibility Accommodations: Requests for accommodation involving accessibility of the testing site are normally addressed by test administrators. This includes, but is not limited to, access to the testing facility and assistance inside the facility or examination room. It also includes providing alternative seating arrangements as needed (e.g., you may need to seat an individual in a wheelchair at a table rather than at a student desk). In some cases, it may be necessary to schedule a separate session to ensure that applicants are tested at an accessible location.

Other Accommodations: The following are other types of accommodations that would normally be provided by agency test administrators without further consultation:

- Alternate test dates;
- Individual sessions;
- Individual monitors;
- Frequent breaks (between test parts only);
- Special lighting;

- Use of magnification or low-vision aids;
- Special acoustics (e.g., quiet room);
- Preferential seating arrangements;
- Sign language interpreter; and
- Miscellaneous personal assistance (e.g., turning pages, marking answers).

Implementing any one or a combination of these measures may be appropriate for individual applicants depending on their needs, the purpose of the assessment procedure, and the specific tasks required of the applicant during the examination process. If the requested accommodation is not on the above list, see the section on "Accommodations with Potential Impact."

Accommodations with potential impact

When an applicant requests an accommodation that may affect the competitive nature or the validity of the assessment process, it should be reviewed by an employment testing expert. This includes any departure from standardized testing procedures prescribed in the directions for conducting (DFC) an examination. The DFC contains detailed, step-by-step instructions used to administer an assessment procedure (e.g., list of required materials, time limits, test security protocols).

An assessment accommodation is not reasonable or appropriate if it:

- Compromises the validity, reliability, or security of a test;
- Fundamentally modifies what is being assessed;
- Imposes an undue administrative or financial burden on the agency; or
- Provides an unfair advantage to an applicant with a disability.

Standardized testing conditions are established to provide a common basis for interpreting assessment scores. A request for an accommodation is, in effect, a request for a modified test administration. The purpose of a modified test administration is to eliminate, insofar as possible, sources of difficulty that are irrelevant to the competencies/KSAs being measured. An assessment accommodation should balance the needs of the applicant with the need to maintain the validity and competitive nature of the assessment process.

When the conditions of measurement change (e.g., timing, mode of presentation, response format), the meaning and interpretation of assessment scores may change. Valid comparisons of individual scores may become impossible. When a proposed accommodation involves changing the standardized conditions of administration, consult an employment testing expert to evaluate the possible psychometric impact on assessment validity.

Undue hardship

Agencies are required to provide reasonable accommodation in examinations to qualified applicants with known disabilities except in cases of undue hardship. The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, defines an undue hardship as an action requiring significant difficulty or expense when considered in light of the employer's size, financial resources, and the nature and structure of the operation. The following examples may constitute an undue hardship with respect to the assessment process (see note at bottom):

- The purchase or rental of specialized equipment or services at great expense, for a one-time or limited use by only a very few applicants;
- To postpone announcing or administering an examination for a large number of applicants to accommodate the needs of an individual applicant. (Note: This does not prohibit establishing an alternative date for the individual in appropriate circumstances.); or
- Any action violating the seniority provisions of a collective bargaining agreement.

Note: These examples are for illustrative purposes. Each agency will need to determine whether its specific situation(s) meets the definition of undue hardship.

Other assessment accommodations

Although most requests for accommodation in the assessment process will involve written tests, it is important to realize that other types of assessment procedures commonly used by the Federal Government may present serious difficulties for certain individuals. Other frequently used assessment methods and types of accommodation are described below. This listing is not intended to be all inclusive, but only representative of the range of effective accommodations that might be considered in particular situations.

Employment Interviews: Interviews may pose problems for some deaf and hard of hearing individuals and for those with certain kinds of speech challenges. Do not make assumptions about an applicant's preferred medium of communication. Analyze the needs of the individual in relation to the specific demands of the interview process. In some cases, it may be appropriate for review committee members to give a written copy of interview questions to deaf or hard of hearing applicants to read prior to the interview. See the section on "Hearing Impairments" for further information.

Performance Tests: Test administrators should consider the physical needs of the applicant with a disability taking performance tests just as they do for written tests. Because performance tests generally approximate tasks found on the job, modifications or adjustments to test material or the procedures used to administer these tests should be carefully analyzed before implementation. Only those accommodations that do not compromise the competitive nature and validity of the testing process should be considered.

Applications and Employment Questionnaires: Applicants with disabilities may need assistance when completing application forms, experience supplements, or other questionnaires. Human resources staff should be alerted to the possibility of such requests, and be prepared to offer assistance.

Hearing impairments

Applicants with hearing impairments constitute one of the largest groups requiring assessment accommodations. Communication barriers can make the assessment process extremely difficult for these individuals. Fortunately, there are many test administration options available to deaf and hard of hearing applicants. The most appropriate accommodation will depend upon several factors, such as the extent of hearing loss, the accuracy and fluency of speech reading skills, age of onset, and whether the individual uses and is fluent in American Sign Language (ASL). ASL is a gestural language that has a different vocabulary, syntax, and structure from English. Most — but not all — applicants who are deaf will probably need to use a qualified interpreter.

The first step is to consider the accommodation requested by the individual and offer the following options as appropriate:

- Use preferential seating near the examiner so that the test applicant is able to read lips unobstructed.
- Use an ASL interpreter for the administrative instructions portion of the session.
- Provide a written version of examination instructions that applicants can read on their own.
- Offer other accommodations if reasonable and accompanied by supporting documentation.

Not all deaf applicants will have the same accommodation needs. For many people who acquired hearing loss at birth or before attaining language fluency, English is a second language that they did not have the opportunity to hear and use. Such individuals may prefer an ASL interpreter to translate orally-administered test instructions rather than a written version of the oral instructions.

Similarly, providing an ASL interpreter to individuals who became deaf later in life and never learned sign language would not be an option. For such individuals, it may be more appropriate to provide a written version of the orally-administered test instructions.

Using an American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter

The following guidelines may be helpful when testing any applicant who requests an ASL interpreter. These guidelines are most effective when reviewed by all individuals administering or involved in monitoring an examination (including ASL interpreters) in which there are applicants who are using an ASL interpreter.

Note: Agencies should not use employees as sign language interpreters unless the employees are qualified to do this work and it falls within their job descriptions.

- Interpreters should possess adequate skills to interpret spoken test instructions. If possible, you should use interpreters who are certified by the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, have passed a state quality assurance test, or have a similar certification or qualification.
- The test administrator and the ASL interpreter who is to interpret the spoken test instructions should review the directions for conducting the examination (and any other required material) prior to the examination.
- Any review of examination material by the ASL interpreter should be conducted under conditions that maintain complete test security.
- Applicants who are using an interpreter for an orally-administered assessment (e.g., a test measuring the ability to follow oral instructions) should be tested in a separate area or room to minimize distractions.
- For orally-administered material, the interpreter should wait at each designated pause until every applicant who is using the interpreter clearly indicates that he or she is ready to proceed with the next instruction.
- During the assessment, applicants using an ASL interpreter for orally-administered instructions would normally not be required to adhere to the same time restrictions imposed on other applicants.

In addition to consulting with an employment testing expert regarding requests for nonstandard testing, you may wish to contact sources in your local community for more information about accommodating people who are deaf or hard of hearing. These may include local associations for people who are deaf or hard of hearing, local community colleges with ASL interpreter programs, associations of speech and hearing sciences, state independent living centers, or state vocational rehabilitation offices. National resources include the Job Accommodation Network (**http://www.jan.wvu.edu**) and the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (**http://www.rid.org**).

Summary of basic steps and principles

In evaluating a request for modified testing, first consider whether adequate documentation exists to establish a disability that substantially limits one or more major life activities. Once the supporting documentation has been reviewed, you must determine whether the disorder rises to the level of a disability under the law. Keep in mind that the law's definition of a disability often differs from a clinical diagnosis. The Rehabilitation Act is not intended to cover all impairments, but only those that substantially limit a major life activity. Major life activities are those basic functions that the average person in the general population can perform with little or no difficulty such as caring for oneself, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, or learning.

The next step involves evaluating the reasonableness of the proposed accommodation. Assessment accommodations are provided to qualified applicants to remove any artificial barriers that may arise from the assessment situation. The goal is to provide persons with

disabilities an equal opportunity to demonstrate their job qualifications without compromising the validity or competitive nature of the examining process. An assessment accommodation **should not**:

- Fundamentally modify the nature of the examination;
- Impose an undue administrative or financial burden on the agency;
- Compromise the security, validity, or reliability of the examination; or
- Provide an unfair advantage to an applicant with a disability.

You should consider only those accommodations that modify the assessment process in appropriate ways. Refer to your agency's written policies and procedures for specific information such as requirements for initiating requests, timeframes for responding to requests, procedures for handling confidential records, information tracking and reporting, and applicant appeal rights when requests are denied.