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Special Hiring Authorities Available for the Appointment of Veterans

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Veterans Recruitment Appointment (VRA) Authority

General Information

The Veterans Recruitment Appointment (VRA) authority is a special hiring authority that allows for the appointment of eligible veterans without competition to positions at any grade level through GS-11 or equivalent (reference 5 CFR Part 307).

If there's more than one VRA candidate for the same job and one or more is a preference eligible, veterans' preference procedures must be applied (see 5 CFR Part 302). A veteran who is eligible for a VRA appointment is not automatically eligible for veterans' preference.

A training or education program must be established for any VRA appointee who has less than 15 years of education (i.e., high school diploma or equivalent plus 3 additional years of education). This program is developed by the hiring manager in consultation with the servicing HR Specialist and should meet the needs of both the agency and the employee.

Eligibility Requirements

In order to be eligible for a VRA appointment, veterans must have been separated under honorable conditions and be included in one of the following categories:

- Disabled veterans; or
- Veterans who served on active duty in the Armed Forces during a war, or in a campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge has been authorized; or
- Veterans who, while serving on active duty in the Armed Forces, participated in a United States military operation for which an Armed Forces Service Medal was awarded; or
- Recently separated veterans, i.e., within 3 years of discharge or release from active duty.

Appointment Options

Excepted Service:

- Excepted Appointment
 - After two years of satisfactory service on an excepted appointment, the veteran must be converted to a permanent career or career-conditional appointment, as appropriate.

Competitive Service:

- Temporary or term appointments may be made using the VRA authority; however, these are not considered to be VRA appointments and do not lead to conversion to career-conditional appointment.
- Temporary Appointment Not-to-Exceed
 - Appropriate uses include meeting workload peaks, uncertainty of future funding, and seasonal work.

- Appointments are made for up to 1 year with extensions up to 2 years total.
- Manager must certify in writing:
 - the position has not been filled for more than 24 months within the preceding 3-year period;
 - has not been filled with a successor position; and
 - to the temporary nature of the work prior to the position being filled.
- Term Appointment Not-to-Exceed
 - Appropriate uses include project work, extraordinary workload, reorganization, uncertainty of future funding, etc.
 - The hiring manager must submit a justification that identifies the reason for filling the position on a term basis.
 - Appointments are made for at least 13 months and can be extended up to 4 years in duration.

Requirements for Considering Displaced/Surplus Employees

Excepted Service Appointment –

Provisions of the Career Transition Assistance Plan (CTAP)/Interagency Career Transition Assistance Plan (ICTAP) do not apply to a VRA appointment (reference 5 CFR 330.609(i) and 330.707(g)) or to the subsequent conversion to a permanent career or career-conditional appointment (reference 5 CFR 330.609(e)(1) and 330.707(h)(1)).

Competitive Service Appointments –

- **Appointments for 120 days or less:** CTAP/ICTAP provisions do not apply if the appointment is for a period of 120 days or less (reference 5 CFR 330.609(c) and 330.707(e)).
 - If a request is received to extend an appointment beyond the 120 day period, then the instructions below must be followed before the appointment can be extended.
- **Appointments for 121 days or more:** CTAP/ICTAP must be cleared if the appointment is for a period of 121 days or more. If the individual is a 10-point veteran, ICTAP provisions do not apply (reference 5 CFR 330.707(c)). This means:
 - **If the individual is not a 10-point veteran,** then a vacancy announcement must be issued and open to candidates eligible for CTAP/ICTAP in the local commuting area (LCA) of the position. There is no need for the veteran to apply to the vacancy since they're being considered noncompetitively. As long as no qualified CTAP/ICTAP eligibles apply, then the veteran may be appointed.
 - **If the individual is a 10-point veteran,** ICTAP does not apply so only the CTAP rules must be followed. The DOI Special Selection Priority list maintained at <http://www.doi.gov/hrm/ssplist.html> must be checked to see if there are any DOI employees in the LCA of the position being filled. If there are none, then the individual may be appointed. If there are DOI

employees in the LCA, a vacancy announcement must be issued as explained above.

Probationary/Trial Period Requirements

Excepted Service Appointment –

- **Preference Eligibles** are required to serve a 1-year trial period.
- **Non-Preference Eligibles** are required to serve a 2-year trial period.

Once the individual has served under the 2-year excepted appointment and is converted to a permanent career, or career-conditional appointment, he/she does not serve a new probationary period. The time spent under the excepted appointment satisfies the requirement.

Competitive Service Appointment –

- Term appointees are required to serve a 1-year trial period.
- Temporary appointees do not serve a trial or probationary period.

30% or More Disabled Veteran Authority

General Information

This hiring authority provides for the noncompetitive appointment of veterans with compensable service-connected disabilities of 30% or more (reference 5 CFR 316.302(b)(4) and 316.402(b)(4)). There is no grade level limitation for this authority, but the appointee must meet all qualification requirements of the position to which appointed.

Eligibility Requirements

The disability must be documented by a notice of:

- Retirement or discharge due to service-connected disability from active military service dated at any time; or
- Compensable disability rating from the Department of Veterans Affairs dated 1991 or later.

Appointment Options

An agency may give a noncompetitive temporary appointment of more than 60 days or a term appointment (minimum period allowed is 13 months).

- Temporary Appointment Not-to-Exceed
 - Appropriate uses include meeting workload peaks, uncertainty of future funding, and seasonal work.
 - Appointments are made for up to 1 year with extensions up to 2 years total.
 - Manager must certify in writing:
 - the position has not been filled for more than 24 months within the preceding 3-years;
 - has not been filled with a successor position; and
 - to the temporary nature of the work prior to the position being filled.
- Term Appointment Not-to-Exceed
 - Appropriate uses include project work, extraordinary workload, reorganization, uncertainty of future funding, etc.
 - The hiring manager must submit a justification that identifies the reason for filling the position on a term basis.
 - Appointments are made for at least 13 months and can be extended up to 4 years in duration.

The agency may convert the employee, without a break in service, to a permanent career or career-conditional appointment at any time during the employee's temporary or term appointment.

Requirements for Considering Displaced/Surplus Employees

- **Appointments for 120 days or less:** Provisions of the Career Transition Assistance Plan (CTAP)/Interagency Career Transition Assistance Plan (ICTAP) do not apply if the appointment is for a period of 120 days or less (reference 5 CFR 330.609(c) and 330.707(e)).
 - If a request is received to extend an appointment beyond the 120 day period, then the instructions below must be followed before the appointment can be extended.
- **Appointments for 121 days or more:** CTAP must be cleared if the appointment is for a period of 121 days or more. Note: ICTAP provisions do not apply to 10-point veterans (reference 5 CFR 330.707(c)). Follow the instructions below for satisfying the CTAP requirements:
 - The DOI Special Selection Priority list maintained at <http://www.doi.gov/hrm/ssplist.html> must be checked to see if there are any DOI employees in the local commuting area (LCA) of the position being filled. If there are none, then the individual may be appointed. If there are DOI employees in the LCA, a vacancy announcement must be issued and open to candidates eligible for CTAP in the LCA of the position. There is no need for the veteran to apply to the vacancy since they're being considered noncompetitively. As long as no CTAP eligibles apply, then the veteran may be appointed.
- If the individual is later converted to a career or career-conditional appointment, CTAP/ICTAP provisions do not apply (reference 5 CFR 330.609(e)(2) and 330.707(h)(2)).

Probationary/Trial Period Requirements

- Term appointees are required to serve a 1-year trial period.
- Temporary appointees do not serve a trial or probationary period.

If the individual is later converted to a permanent career, or career-conditional appointment without a break in service, the time spent under a term appointment counts toward the 1-year probationary period. Time spent under a temporary appointment is not creditable toward meeting the 1-year probationary period requirement.

Disabled Veterans Enrolled in a Department of Veterans Affairs Training Program

General Information

Disabled veterans eligible for training under the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) vocational rehabilitation program may enroll for training or work experience at an agency under the terms of an agreement between the agency and the VA (reference 5 CFR 315.604).

Training is tailored to the individual's needs and goals, so there is no set length. If the training is intended to prepare the individual for eventual appointment in the agency rather than just provide work experience, the agency must ensure that the training will enable the veteran to meet the qualification requirements for the position. The VA may pay for some of the formal training based on the individual's rehabilitation plan. The agency is responsible for providing on the job training and for expenses associated with any training they require the individual to complete.

While enrolled in the VA program, the veteran is not a Federal employee but is a beneficiary of the VA.

Upon successful completion, the host agency and the VA give the veteran a Certificate of Training showing the occupational series and grade level of the position for which trained.

Appointment Options

The Certificate of Training allows any agency to appoint the veteran noncompetitively under a status quo appointment (a competitive service appointment without time limit) that may be converted to a permanent career or career-conditional appointment at any time.

Requirements for Considering Displaced/Surplus Employees

The Career Transition Assistance Plan (CTAP)/Interagency Career Transition Assistance Plan (ICTAP) must be cleared before the status quo appointment can be made. If the individual is a 10-point veteran, ICTAP provisions do not apply (reference 5 CFR 330.707(c)).

- **If the individual is not a 10-point veteran**, then a vacancy announcement must be issued and open to candidates eligible for CTAP/ICTAP in the local commuting area (LCA) of the position. There is no need for the veteran to apply to the vacancy since they're being considered noncompetitively. As long as no CTAP/ICTAP eligibles apply, then the veteran may be appointed.
- **If the individual is a 10-point veteran**, ICTAP does not apply so only the CTAP rules must be followed. The DOI Special Selection Priority list maintained at <http://www.doi.gov/hrm/ssplist.html> must be checked to see if there are any DOI employees in the LCA of the position being filled. If there are none, then the individual may be appointed. If there are DOI employees in the LCA, a vacancy announcement must be issued as described above.

- If the individual is later converted to a permanent career or career-conditional appointment, CTAP/ICTAP provisions do not apply (reference 5 CFR 330.609(e) and 330.707(h)).

Probationary/Trial Period Requirements

If the individual is appointed to a status quo appointment, a 1-year trial period is required. The time spent under the VA Training Program is not creditable since the individual was not a Federal employee.

If the individual is later converted to a permanent career, or career-conditional appointment without a break in service, the time spent under a status quo appointment counts toward the 1-year probationary period.

Special Appointing Authority for People with Disabilities (Schedule A)

General Information

Individuals with disabilities may apply for jobs filled either competitively or noncompetitively through an excepted service appointing authority, i.e. Schedule A. Individuals must meet the qualification requirements for the job and be able to perform the essential duties of the position with or without reasonable accommodation. The Schedule A hiring authority can be used to hire individuals with mental retardation, severe physical disabilities, or psychiatric disabilities.

Hiring managers should work with the Office of Diversity and Equal Opportunity for assistance in arranging for a reasonable accommodation.

Eligibility Requirements

Proof of Disability:

- Individuals must provide proof of their disability prior to making an appointment. Appropriate documentation may include records, statements, or other information issued by a licensed medical professional, a licensed vocational rehabilitation specialist, or any government agency that issues or provides disability benefits.

Certification of Job Readiness:

- Individuals must provide a certification that he/she is likely to succeed in performing the duties of the position to which he/she is being appointed. This certification may be provided by any entity specified above.
- In cases where a certification of job readiness has not been provided, the individual may be given a temporary appointment to determine the individual's job readiness. Service under another type of temporary appointment in the competitive or excepted service may serve as proof of job readiness (this is at the discretion of the hiring organization).

Appointment Options

Temporary (1-year or less) Excepted Appointment Not-to-Exceed:

- An individual may be given a temporary excepted appointment based upon proof of disability when:
 - It is necessary to observe the individual on the job to determine whether he/she is able or ready to perform the duties of the position. If this option is used to determine an individual's job readiness, the hiring organization may convert the individual to a time limited appointment or to an excepted appointment without time limit whenever it's determined the individual is able to perform the duties of the position; **or**
 - The individual has a certification of job readiness and the work is of a temporary nature.

Time Limited (at least 13 months) Excepted Appointment Not-to-Exceed:

- An individual may be given an excepted appointment on a time limited basis when the duties of the position do not require it to be filled on a permanent basis. The individual must provide proof of disability and certification of job readiness, or demonstration of job readiness through a temporary appointment.

Excepted Appointment (Without Time Limit):

- An individual may be given an excepted appointment without time limit based upon proof of disability and certification of job readiness, or demonstration of job readiness through a temporary appointment.
- After completing 2 years of satisfactory service, the individual may be noncompetitively converted to a permanent career or career-conditional appointment. Credit may be given toward the 2-year requirement for time spent on a temporary excepted appointment as described above.

Requirements for Considering Displaced/Surplus Employees

Provisions of the Career Transition Assistance Plan (CTAP)/Interagency Career Transition Assistance Plan (ICTAP) do not apply to the appointment of an individual under an excepted service appointing authority (reference 5 CFR 330.609(i) and 330.707(g)) or to the potential subsequent conversion to a permanent career or career-conditional appointment (reference 5 CFR 330.609(e)(3) and 330.707(h)(3)).

Probationary/Trial Period Requirements

Temporary Excepted Appointment Not-to-Exceed:

- Temporary appointees do not serve a trial or probationary period.

Time Limited Excepted Appointment Not-to-Exceed:

- **Preference Eligibles** are required to serve a 1-year trial period.
- **Non-Preference Eligibles** are required to serve a 2-year trial period.

Excepted Appointment (Without Time Limit):

- **Preference Eligibles** are required to serve a 1-year trial period.
- **Non-Preference Eligibles** are required to serve a 2-year trial period.

If the individual is converted to a permanent career or career-conditional appointment after serving under the 2-year excepted appointment, the time spent under the excepted appointment satisfies the probationary period requirement of the new career/career-conditional appointment.