

**Functional Series 400 - Personnel  
ADS 418 - Promotion and Internal Placement**

\*Asterisks next to a section number in the table of contents indicate that the section is new or was substantively revised. An asterisk in the body of the chapter indicates that the text of the adjacent paragraph is new or was substantively changed.

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## **ADS 418 – Promotion and Internal Placement**

### **418.1 OVERVIEW**

Effective Date – 11/10/1998

This chapter provides the policies and procedures for managing the United States Agency for International Development's (USAID's) Promotion and Internal Placement Program. The objectives of the program are to ensure compliance with applicable regulations and to provide the Agency with the best-qualified candidates to fill competitive service positions.

The provisions of this Chapter may be applied to program and internal placement actions within the excepted service at the discretion of the Agency.

### **418.2 PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES**

Effective Date – 11/10/1998

- a. The Deputy Administrator (DA/AID) adjudicates formal appeals of selection decisions that may adversely effect equal opportunity and affirmative action goals.
- b. The Deputy Assistant Administrator for the Office of Human Resources in the Bureau for Management (DAA/M/HR) is responsible for overseeing the Promotion and Internal Placement Program and for providing guidance to employees and managers concerning actions associated with promotion and placement processes.
- c. The Bureau for Management, Office of Human Resources, Policy, Planning, and Information Management Division (M/HR/PPIM) is responsible for making changes to the program as new Governmentwide policies are issued.
- d. The Bureau for Management, Office of Human Resources, Labor and Employee Relations and Performance Management Division (M/HR/LERPM) is responsible for the following:
  - (1) Negotiating with labor organizations as required and/or appropriate under the provisions of the Federal Labor-Management Relations Program and;
  - (2) Informing labor organizations about regulatory and administrative requirements that have an effect on the way in which vacancies may be filled.
- e. The Personnel Operations Division, Bureau for Management, Office of Human Resources (M/HR/POD) is responsible for administering the Agency's Promotion and Internal Placement Program and ensuring that it conforms to the policies and requirements of [5 U.S.C. Section 2301](#), Merit Systems Principles, [5 CFR Part 300](#), Employment General, [5 CFR 330](#), Recruitment, Selection and Placement, [5 CFR 335](#), Promotion and Internal Placement, and this chapter. M/HR/POD also provides technical advice and guidance as necessary to Bureaus, Offices, and Administrative Management Staff.

- f. Supervisors and Selecting Officials are responsible for the following:
- Initiating actions to fill competitive service positions;
  - Performing job analyses for the purpose of developing selective and quality ranking factors, and crediting plans to evaluate applicants;
  - Giving full and fair consideration to the qualifications of each candidate certified for a vacancy;
  - Selecting the candidate best able to perform the job as measured by job-related selection criteria; and
  - Ensuring that those employees selected for other positions are released in accordance with Agency procedures.
- g. Administrative Management Staff (AMS) is responsible for the following:
- Submitting requests for personnel actions, with appropriate documentation, to M/HR/POD to fill vacant positions and coordinating the actions through to completion;
  - Advising employees scheduled to be temporarily absent of procedures to be followed if they wish consideration for promotional opportunities during their absence;
  - Notifying supervisors, in writing, of the effective date of a career-ladder promotion and their responsibility at the time of the assignment; and
  - Providing assistance and guidance to employees on basic merit staffing policies and procedures.
- h. The Director of the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs (EOP) is responsible for the following:
- Reviewing selections to determine the adverse impact a selection might have on the Agency's Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action Programs; and
  - Referring selection decisions to the DA/AID, when appropriate.
- i. Employees are responsible for the following:
- Complying with merit promotion policies and procedures as outlined in this Chapter;

- Notifying AMS Officers of their desire to be considered for promotion during temporary absences from their offices or from USAID;
- Keeping their employment records current by updating experience and training on appropriate documentation; and
- Assuming responsibility for their own self-development and remaining alert to promotional opportunities for which they are qualified.

### **418.3 POLICY DIRECTIVES AND REQUIRED PROCEDURES**

Effective Date – 11/10/1998

The statements contained in this ADS chapter are the official Agency policy directives and required procedures relating to promotion and internal placement.

Key words: accretion of additional duties and responsibilities, area of consideration, qualification requirements, best qualified candidates, career-ladder position, local commuting area, competitive status, crediting plan, demotion, detail, eligible candidates, job analysis. (See **418.6**, Definitions, for the entire list of terms for ADS Chapter 418.)

#### **418.3.1 Staffing Policy**

Effective Date – 11/10/1998

##### **418.3.1.1 Getting the Right Person for the Job**

Effective Date – 11/10/1998

It is management's responsibility to seek the best-qualified individuals for vacant positions. In the exercise of this responsibility managers may elect to fill positions from recruitment sources that best meet the needs of the organization in terms of productivity, short and long term staff plans, and total objectives, including affirmative action and equal employment opportunity.

Recruitment through competitive merit staffing (merit promotion) is but one means to fill a position. When qualified candidates for positions can be obtained through other means of recruitment, these methods may be properly utilized concurrently with or to the exclusion of the merit promotion process only when considering OPM mandated sources. Alternative recruitment sources include the following:

- Appointments from U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) certificates;
- Excepted service appointments (including utilizing special appointing authorities to hire people with physical disabilities and veterans);
- Reassignment or rotation of Foreign Service (FS) employees;
- Reassignment of Civil Service employees;

- Selections from Agency-developed lists, i.e., repromotion or reemployment priority lists;
- Appointment of employees exercising reemployment rights;
- Reinstatements and restorations;
- Selection of displaced employees under the Interagency Career Transition Assistance Plan (ICTAP); and
- Transfers from other Federal agencies;

In accordance with the Code of Federal Regulations, the merit promotion process may be cancelled at any time management elects to fill the position(s) using another recruitment source.

When the competitive process is used, the policy directives and required procedures outlined in **418.3.2** and **418.3.4** apply.

#### **418.3.1.2 Measuring Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities**

Effective Date – 11/10/1998

In accordance with [5 CFR 335.103](#), USAID's merit promotion plan requires that selections be made from among the best-qualified candidates who apply for announced vacancies. As a result, USAID must evaluate the basically eligible candidates to determine to what extent their qualifications exceed the minimum requirements. Evaluation methods used will be reasonable and related to the job; and they must be applied fairly to all candidates. To do this, selecting officials will analyze positions to

- a. Identify the basic duties and responsibilities.
- b. Identify the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) required to perform the duties and responsibilities. KSAs
  - Must be essential. These are KSAs that a candidate must possess to perform the job in a reasonable period of time.
  - Must be ratable. This means they can be evaluated on the basis of performance, education, training, and experience information found in the resume, Optional Form (OF-612), or other application documents provided by the applicant. KSAs are not ratable in the crediting plan evaluation process if they can only be evaluated through some other process such as an interview or other assessment mechanism.

- Must be able to distinguish superior from barely acceptable candidates.
- c. Rank the KSAs. The KSAs may or may not be ranked in priority order.

**418.3.1.3 Nepotism - Employment of Relatives**

Effective Date – 11/10/1998

USAID will adhere to all Federal requirements regarding employment of relatives contained in [5 CFR 310](#), Restrictions on the Employment of Relatives.

**418.3.1.4 Non-Discrimination**

Effective Date – 11/10/1998

USAID will adhere to the policies and procedures regarding non-discrimination contained in [5 CFR 335.103](#), Agency promotion programs.

**418.3.1.5 Demonstrated Potential**

Effective Date – 11/10/1998

The employee must have demonstrated a capacity to assume and discharge the duties of the new position.

**418.3.1.6 Requirement for Promotion**

Effective Date – 11/10/1998

To be eligible for promotion, an employee's most recent Annual Evaluation Form (AEF) must reflect a summary rating of "Effective" or better.

**418.3.1.7 Position Change**

Effective Date – 11/10/1998

The Agency will adhere to the following policies and procedures on position change:

- a. [5 CFR 335.101](#), Effect of position change on status and tenure, and
- b. [5 CFR 335.102](#), Agency authority to promote, demote or reassign.

The Bureau for Management, Office of Human Resources, Personnel Operations Division (M/HR/POD) will determine the effective date of any change in an employee's position. However, a change in position may not be made effective before

- a. The position is classified (see [ADS 456](#));
- b. The employee meets all legal requirements for assignment and qualifications standards for the position; and

c. Applicable advance-notice requirements are met when the change in position involves reduction in grade or pay and time-limited actions. (See Mandatory References, [5 CFR 511.701 \[a\] \[3\]](#), Effective dates generally and [5 CFR 335.102 \[f\] \[1\]](#), Agency authority to promote, demote or reassign.)

#### **418.3.1.8 Drug Testing**

Effective Date – 02/07/2002

\*Many USAID competitive service positions are subject to drug testing. See the following references for information related to drug testing:

- Mandatory Reference, [5 CFR 792](#), Subpart A, Regulatory Requirements for Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Programs and Service,
- Mandatory Reference, [ADS 410](#), Drug Free Workplace, and
- Additional Help, [USAID General Notice, Implementation of Drug Testing at USAID](#), dated 03/08/2000.

#### **418.3.2 The Merit Promotion Program**

Effective Date – 11/10/1998

The merit promotion program, when used to fill competitive positions, provides for an open, systematic, and equitable assignment system that ensures management that positions are filled with the best qualified individuals available and ensures employees that they are being equitably considered, based solely in accordance with merit promotion principles established by law and regulation. Agency management determines when the use of the merit promotion program is appropriate for filling vacant positions.

The Merit Promotion Plan governs the staffing of Civil Service (CS) positions, grades 01 through 15 and Federal Wage System (FWS) in USAID. These procedures apply to all positions in the competitive service. The plan may also be used to fill excepted service positions at the discretion of the Agency.

USAID must adhere to the policies and procedures regarding filling competitive positions contained in [5 CFR 335.103](#), Agency promotion programs.

USAID also adheres to all the policies and procedures outlined [in 5 CFR 330, Subpart F and G](#), Career Transition Assistance for Surplus and Displaced Federal Employees when filling competitive positions. The Agency's [Career Transition Assistance Plan](#) (CTAP) is linked to [ADS 452](#), Civil Service Reduction in Force.



**418.3.2.1 Actions Subject to Competitive Procedures**

Effective Date – 02/07/2002

Unless specifically described in 418.3.2.2 of this Chapter the following actions must follow competitive procedures as required by [5 CFR 335.102](#):

- a. Time-limited (temporary) promotions for more than 120 days to higher graded positions. (Prior service during the preceding 12 months under noncompetitive time-limited promotions and noncompetitive details to higher graded positions count toward the 120-day total.)
  - (1) A time-limited promotion is an appropriate mechanism for filling temporary positions, accomplishing project work, filling positions temporarily pending reorganization or downsizing, or meeting other temporary needs for a specified period of not more than five years. To extend time-limited promotions for a longer period, OPM approval is required.
  - (2) A temporary promotion may be made permanent without further competition provided the temporary promotion was originally made under competitive procedures and the fact that the temporary promotion might lead to a permanent promotion was made known to all potential candidates.
- b. Details for more than 120 days to a higher-grade position or to a position with known promotion potential. (Prior service during the preceding 12 months under noncompetitive details to higher graded positions and noncompetitive time-limited promotions count toward the 120-day total.) (See [ADS 432](#) and [ADS 434](#) for more information on details.)
- c. Selection for training that is part of an authorized training agreement, part of a promotion program, or required before an employee may be considered for a promotion (see Mandatory Reference, [5 CFR 410.306](#)).
- d. Reassignment or demotion to a position with greater promotion potential than a position previously held on a permanent basis in the competitive service (except as permitted by reduction in force (RIF) regulations (see [ADS 452](#) for information on RIF).
- e. Transfer to a position at the same grade (according to [5 CFR 330.705](#), Order of selection in filling vacancies from outside the agency's workforce) and to a higher grade or with more promotion potential than a position previously held on a permanent basis in the competitive service.
- f. Reinstatement of an employee to a permanent or temporary position at a higher grade than that last held in the competitive service.

- g. Appointment of a career Foreign Service Officer into the competitive service, under [Executive Order 12292](#) and [5 CFR 315.606](#), to a position higher than the last equivalent Foreign Service grade held by the employee, or to positions that will offer promotion potential.
- h. Appointment of Peace Corps personnel with noncompetitive eligibility to a competitive service position, under [5 CFR 315.607](#), when the position grade higher than the last grade held by the employee, or to a position that will offer promotion potential.
- i. Appointment of certain former overseas employees with noncompetitive eligibility to a competitive position, under [Executive Order 12721](#) and [5 CFR 315.608](#), when the position grade is higher than the last grade held by the employee, or to a position that will offer promotion potential.
- \* j. Appointment of other candidates with noncompetitive eligibility under authorities regulated by OPM, under interchange agreements with other merit systems, and under miscellaneous authorities not regulated by OPM (statutes and court orders), to positions higher than the last equivalent grades held by the employees or to positions which would offer promotion potential. (See Mandatory References, [5 CFR 315](#), Career and Career Conditional Employment and [5 CFR 6.7](#), Movement of persons between the civil service system and other merit systems.)

#### **418.3.2.2 Exceptions to Competitive Requirements**

Effective Date – 02/07/2002

Although all promotions must follow merit principles, they don't all require competition among employees. According to [5 CFR 335.103](#), Agency promotion programs, competition does not apply to the following actions:

- a. A promotion resulting from the upgrading of a position without significant change in the duties and responsibilities due to issuance of a new classification standard or the correction of an initial classification error;
- b. A position change permitted by RIF procedures in [5 CFR 351](#), Reduction in Force;
- c. A promotion of an employee who was appointed in the competitive service from an OPM certificate of eligibles, by direct hire, by noncompetitive appointment or noncompetitive conversion, or under competitive promotion procedures for an assignment intended to prepare the employee for the position being filled as long as the career ladder was documented on the initial position description or personnel action (see [418.3.3.4](#) for more details on Career Ladder Promotions);

- d. A promotion resulting from an employee's position being classified at a higher grade because of additional duties and responsibilities (see **418.3.3.5** for more details on Promotions Based on Accretion of Additional Duties and Responsibilities);
- e. A temporary promotion, or detail to a higher graded position or a position with known promotion potential of 120 days or less;
- f. Promotion to a grade previously held on a permanent basis in the competitive service (or in another merit system with which OPM has an approved interchange agreement from which an employee was separated or demoted for other than performance or conduct reasons) (see **418.3.3.3** for more details on repromotion);
- g. Promotion, reassignment, demotion, transfer, reinstatement, or detail to a position having promotion potential no greater than the potential of a position an employee currently holds or previously held on a permanent basis in the competitive service unless required by 5 CFR 330.705, Order of selection in filling vacancies from outside the agency's workforce (or in another merit system with which OPM has an approved interchange agreement and which the employee did not lose because of performance or conduct reasons);
- h. Consideration of a candidate not given proper consideration in a previous competitive promotion action (See **418.3.3.2** for more information on priority consideration);
- i. Employees selected from the Agency's Reemployment Priority Lists for positions at a grade previously held in the competitive service (see [ADS 452](#), CS Reduction in Force);
- j. Promotions required as a remedy in grievance procedures;
- k. Promotion of an understudy who was selected under merit promotion procedures to his or her target position;
- l. Successful completion of OPM-approved training agreements, such as executive development training, when the agreement specifically provides for promotion; and
- \* m. Conversions to the competitive service under various authorities as follows:
  - \* ● Veterans Readjustment Act (See Mandatory Reference, [5 CFR 315.705](#));
  - \* ● Disabled veterans (See Mandatory Reference, [5 CFR 315.707](#));
  - \* ● Mentally retarded and severely physically handicapped (See Mandatory Reference, [5 CFR 315.709](#));

- Student Career Experience Program (See Mandatory Reference, [5 CFR 213.3202](#));
- \* • Federal Career Intern Program (See Mandatory Reference, [Executive Order 13162](#), dated July 6, 2000, 5 CFR 213.3202, [5 CFR 315.712](#)); and
- Presidential Management Interns (See Mandatory Reference, [5 CFR 315.708](#)).

### **418.3.3 Procedures for Noncompetitive Promotion Actions**

Effective Date – 11/10/1998

#### **418.3.3.1 Time-Limited Promotions**

Effective Date – 02/07/2002

\*If you are selected for a time-limited promotion, the responsible M/HR/POD Specialist will provide you advance written notice of the conditions of the promotion. If the Specialist is unable to give you advance notice; he or she will provide a notice to you within 30 days after the promotion is made. (See Mandatory Reference, [5 CFR 335.102](#), Agency authority to promote, demote or reassign)

\*Generally, the period of a competitive temporary promotion should not exceed one year. If an extension of a temporary promotion is requested in excess of one year, M/HR/POD will review with the employing office a request to extend the temporary promotion for an additional period not to exceed five years versus filling the job permanently.

#### **418.3.3.2 Priority Consideration**

Effective Date – 02/07/2002

If you failed to receive proper consideration in a previous competitive promotion action(s), USAID must give you priority consideration for any job you elect to be considered before the job is filled by competitive means. (See **418.3.7** for information on how to file a grievance.) In these cases, you are entitled to one priority consideration for a vacancy for each instance of lost or improper consideration. You will receive priority consideration under this section for a period of one year from the date of the grievance approval.

- a. Once a decision is made to grant you priority consideration, you will receive written notice from the appropriate Human Resources Specialist in M/HR/POD setting forth the terms of this consideration.
- b. The M/HR/POD specialist will monitor merit promotion recruitment for a period of one year to identify a position that is considered equivalent to the one for which you failed to receive proper consideration.
- c. Once a position is identified, M/HR/POD will contact you to determine your interest in the position.

- If you are interested, an M/HR/POD Specialist will refer your name to the selecting official for the position in a memorandum that states that you are entitled to priority consideration for the position. The Specialist may send this memorandum at any point in the recruiting process, but the selecting official must act upon it before the referral of any other candidates for selection consideration.
  - If you are not interested, you will continue to be eligible for other positions for the remainder of the one-year period.
- \* d. The selecting official must consider you for the vacant position, but is under no obligation to interview or select you. After reaching a decision, the selecting official must indicate on the memorandum whether or not you were selected, give a reason for non-selection, and sign and date the memorandum before returning it to M/HR/POD. You will be notified of the outcome of your referral.
- e. After you have received one priority consideration for an equivalent position, M/HR/POD will notify you that you were considered and that you are no longer eligible to receive priority consideration regardless of whether or not you were selected.
- f. If after one year no appropriate position becomes available for you to exercise your priority consideration, M/HR/POD will let you know, in writing within 30 calendar days, that the period of priority consideration has expired.
- g. If you feel that your priority consideration was not handled properly you may appeal to the Chief, M/HR/POD or designee, who will have the final authority within M/HR to decide your case.

#### **418.3.3.3 Repromotion Consideration**

Effective Date – 02/07/2002

If you have been demoted without personal cause, such as a RIF, you will receive special consideration for higher level jobs and you may be promoted without competition to a position or grade you formerly held. Highlighted below are the procedures used in USAID to extend you repromotion consideration. You will receive consideration for a period of three years from the date of the involuntary action:

- a. M/HR/POD will add your name to a central list of names of employees eligible for repromotion consideration. The list will include, in addition to your name, your office location, your repromotion grade, and all series for which you are qualified. The USOPM Operating Manual: Qualifications Standards for General Schedule Positions will be used to determine your qualifications. The manual is maintained by M/HR/POD and is available for review when appointments are made.

- b. M/HR/POD Human Resources Management Specialists will review the repromotion list to determine if you are qualified for vacancies as they occur.
- \* c. If you meet all requirements for a position, an M/HR/POD Specialist will include your name on a repromotion certificate and send it to the selecting official for consideration. Your name may be referred prior to the announcement of jobs under the merit promotion program or before a selection certificate(s), resulting from an announcement, is issued.
- \* d. Interviews are optional so you may or may not be interviewed by the selecting official for the position. Once the selecting official has had an opportunity to review the repromotion certificate and/or your personnel file, he or she must make a decision on you. Once made, the selecting official completes the repromotion certificate and returns it to the responsible Specialist in M/HR/POD.
- \* e. If you are selected, you will be notified by the Specialist and offered the position. If you decline the position, your repromotion eligibility ceases.
- f. If you are not chosen for the position, the selecting official must give M/HR/POD a reason for this action. The Deputy Chief, M/HR/POD, will review the submission and make a decision whether to accept it or not.
- \* If the Deputy Chief accepts the reason, he or she will authorize the responsible Specialist to release the merit promotion announcement for posting or the certificate developed as a result of a closed announcement for selection action.  
  
If the Deputy Chief does not accept the reason, he or she will meet with the selecting official to discuss the reasons why the candidate was not selected.
- \* g. You will be notified by the responsible Specialist of your referral and if not selected, the reason for the decision. If you feel that your repromotion consideration was not handled properly you may appeal to the Chief, M/HR/POD for final adjudication.
- \* h. Your name will remain on the repromotion list for the three-year period unless you are selected for repromotion to a grade equal to or higher than the one from which you were demoted.

#### **418.3.3.4 Career Ladder Promotion**

Effective Date – 02/07/2002

Some positions are announced and filled by career ladder. A career ladder is a series of developmental positions of increasing difficulty in the same line of work, through which an employee may receive promotions to the journeyman level of his or her position based on his or her personal development and performance in that series.

If you are selected for a career-ladder position, the following procedures will apply:

- a. Administrative Management Staff must notify supervisors, in writing, of the effective date of your entrance on duty in the position and their responsibility at the time of your assignment.
- b. Supervisors must
  - Develop and provide you with a clear description of benchmark performance criteria at each level of the career ladder; e.g., must count 200 widgets per second for a period of six months to move from level one to level two;
  - Develop and provide you with an individual development plan specific to your needs;
  - Assign to you some developmental work and/or projects of sufficient complexity and responsibility to allow you to demonstrate capability to perform satisfactorily at the next higher level;
  - Provide feedback on your performance during and at the completion of any developmental assignment; and
  - Provide timely evaluation of your overall performance at the end of the rating cycle.
- c. Entrance into a career-ladder position does not guarantee promotion. To be eligible for promotion to each level of the career-ladder
  - You must have progressed steadily within the terms of your individual development plan or program;
  - Your supervisor must certify in writing to M/HR/POD that you have demonstrated the ability to perform at the next highest level, that the work continues to exist, and that he or she recommends you for promotion to the next higher grade;
  - Your current rating of record is "Effective" or higher. In addition, you may not receive a career-ladder promotion if your rating is below "Effective" on a critical work objective that is also critical to performance at the next higher grade of the career ladder. (See Mandatory Reference, [5 CFR 335.104](#), Eligibility for career-ladder promotion); and
  - You must meet the time-in-grade and qualifications requirements.

d. If your supervisor has not submitted a request for your promotion by the anniversary date of your selection or last promotion, you may request a determination from your supervisor whether he or she is prepared to recommend a promotion. Your supervisor must provide you a written response within 10 working days of your request. If you are dissatisfied with the response your supervisor gives, you may contact your AMS officer for further guidance.

\* e. If your supervisor recommends you for a promotion, he or she submits the required paperwork to the Administrative Officer for action. The Administrative Officer prepares the [Standard Form 52 \(SF-52\)](#), Request for Personnel Action, attaches the supervisor's recommendation and a position description of the higher level position, and submits the package to the responsible Specialist in M/HR/POD.

f. The Specialist makes your promotion effective the beginning of the first pay period after approval of the action.

#### **418.3.3.5 Promotions Based on Accretion of Additional Duties and Responsibilities**

Effective Date – 02/07/2002

You may also be given a promotion when your job is upgraded because of the gradual addition (or accretion) of new duties and responsibilities. You may be approved for a promotion based on accretion:

- a. When M/HR/POD determines, through an audit of your position, either with you or your supervisor or both, that added duties and responsibilities represent a logical extension of your old job;
- b. When the promotion patterns of your new and old position are the same (e.g., one grade or two grade interval positions);
- c. When the action to promote you will not adversely impact the current grade of another employee; and
- d. Provided there is no known promotion potential beyond the accretion itself.

Your supervisor must be prepared to explain how the additional duties and responsibilities evolved to your position. If your position is non-supervisory, as defined by USOPM classification standards, your supervisor can not assign supervisory duties to get your position upgraded.

If you are approved for a promotion under this section, you must meet eligibility and qualification requirements before the promotion can be effected.



Human Resources Specialists in M/HR/POD must make these determinations and provide appropriate remarks on [SF-52s](#), Requests for Personnel Action, of actions resulting in direct promotion.

\*Promotions are effective the first pay period following approval of the requested action by M/HR/POD.

#### **418.3.4 The Agency's Use of the Merit Promotion Program**

Effective Date – 11/10/1998

When the merit promotion program is used, the policy directives and required procedures in sections 418.3.4.1 through 418.3.4.20 will apply.

##### **418.3.4.1 Development of Crediting Plans**

Effective Date – 02/07/2002

The selecting official must develop a crediting plan for each position approved in his or her organization to be filled under the competitive procedures, subject to the review and concurrence by M/HR/POD. A crediting plan is a set of benchmarks developed for all knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) required for the position.

- The KSAs are listed on the vacancy announcement and used to evaluate all eligible and qualified promotional candidates. The selecting official must list no more than four or no fewer than three KSAs on an announcement.
- A benchmark is a group of examples of experience, education, or training that shows how one could acquire a KSA at a particular level of competency. Each benchmark defines three level of performance for which points are assigned.

\*Crediting plans in USAID consist of three defined levels with point values as indicated: Superior (4 points), Good (3 points), and Acceptable (2 points). These defined levels, as described below, will be used by raters described in **418.3.4.15** to rate the applications of all eligible and qualified candidates with competitive status, regardless of the number found to be qualified.

- SUPERIOR (4 points) = Applicant demonstrates experience, education, training, and performance equivalent to having held the position being filled.
- GOOD (3 points) = Applicant demonstrates knowledge, skills, and abilities indicating good potential to perform at the next higher level with limited additional training or experience.
- ACCEPTABLE (2 points) = Applicant meets minimum requirements for consideration indicating that he or she could most likely perform the work of the position but cannot demonstrate specific experience, training, and performance described at the 3 point level.

The selecting official may seek guidance from his or her Administrative Officer or the responsible Human Resources Specialist in M/HR/POD when developing crediting plans.

#### **418.3.4.2 Vacancy Announcements**

Effective Date – 02/07/2002

Human Resources Specialists in M/HR/POD will prepare vacancy announcements in consultation with the selecting official or the selecting official's designee. Vacancy announcements must contain the following information, as appropriate.

- a. Title, series, and grade of the position.
- b. Organizational unit where the position is located.
- c. Area of consideration (see **418.3.4.3**). The responsible M/HR/POD Human Resources Specialist determines the area of consideration for a particular announcement.
- d. Description of duties (selected from position description).
- \* e. Qualifications requirements. As stated in OPM's Operating Manual: Qualification Standards for General Schedule Positions or as stated in modified qualifications standards, as developed by the Agency and permitted by OPM regulations.
- f. Quality Ranking and/or Selective factors, if used. Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (KSAs) and/or other information about the methods that will be used in the evaluation process.
- g. Application procedures.
- h. Opening and closing dates of the announcement.
- i. Equal Employment Opportunity Employer statement.
- j. A statement when the position has known promotion potential or when a subsequent promotion may be made permanent without further competition, when the position is advertised as a temporary promotion.
- k. The number of vacancies to be filled under the announcement.
- l. Any special requirements for the position (e.g., security, suitability, medical clearances, drug testing) and any other pertinent information (e.g. entrance pay, locality pay, special pay rates, work schedule) that applies to the position.

m. Special selection priority information as required by 5 CFR 330.708. Special selection priority means that surplus and/or displaced employees that apply and are found well qualified must be selected over any other candidate for vacancies in the local commuting area. (See Mandatory References, [5 CFR 330, Recruitment, Selection and Placement, Subpart F and G](#), Career Transition Assistance for Surplus and Displaced Employees and the Agency's Career Transition and Assistance Plan linked to [ADS 452](#), CS Reduction In Force.)

n. A statement indicating whether or not USAID will pay for permanent relocation expenses for announcements issued outside the commuting area.

\* o. The following statement on reasonable accommodation language as required by [Executive Order 13078](#), Plan to increase the representation of adults with disabilities in the Federal workforce:

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 person listed on the vacancy announcement. The decision on granting reasonable accommodation will be on a case-by-case basis.

p. A point of contact and telephone number within M/HR/POD who has knowledge of the position(s) advertised.

#### **418.3.4.3 Areas of Consideration**

Effective Date – 11/10/1998

Areas of consideration are established to ensure that an adequate supply of qualified candidates can be located in order for the selecting official to be able to choose from among a reasonable number of well-qualified individuals. An area of consideration balances such needs as open and fair competition, adequate numbers of qualified applicants, timely response to the needs of selecting officials, and equal employment objectives.

The primary area of consideration in USAID is USAID/W.

The area of consideration may be expanded should the minimum area of consideration fail to yield sufficient candidates. Concurrent consideration of individuals outside the agency may be offered on any vacancy announcement by adding the appropriate statement to the area of consideration as follows:

- Commuting area,
- Government-wide, or
- Nationwide (All Sources).

For Nationwide announcements concurrent consideration is given to individuals working for the government and those working in the private sector.

#### **418.3.4.4 Posting Periods**

Effective Date – 11/10/1998

You must stay alert to opening and closing dates of announcements so you can apply in time to be considered. M/HR/POD Specialists will determine the posting period for an announcement. Closing dates will include only workdays. If a recognized Federal holiday falls within the open period, M/HR/POD will extend the closing date of the announcement by one additional day. Minimum posting periods are

- USAID/W: 10 workdays,
- Commuting Area: 10 workdays, and
- Governmentwide or nationwide announcements: 20 workdays.

#### **418.3.4.5 Amendments and Corrections**

Effective Date – 11/10/1998

If you or the responsible Specialist in M/HR/POD finds that information is incorrect or missing while an announcement is open, the Specialist will amend or correct the announcement. The Specialist will highlight the amended or corrected information in a prominent place on the announcement and will extend the closing date so that the corrected announcement is open for the entire period that was required for the original announcement.

#### **418.3.4.6 Open Continuous Announcements**

Effective Date – 02/07/2002

In occupational categories where there is frequent turnover, M/HR/POD may keep an announcement open continuously to respond quickly to an office's need to fill additional vacancies. These announcements have no specific closing dates but remain open until superseded or terminated. The responsible Specialist will establish several cut-off dates while the announcement is open for receipt of applications. The cut off date(s) will be reflected in the upper right hand corner of the announcement.

\*You may apply for the announcement the first time it is published or you may wait for subsequent announcement dates. Once you apply, your application will be

- Reviewed for eligibility and qualifications,
- Rated and ranked according to policy, and
- Referred to the selecting official, if evaluated best qualified, for consideration along with others who apply for that cut-off date.

\*Once a selection is made, the activity relating to that cut-off date will be closed out and the successful and unsuccessful applicants notified.

\*If you were unsuccessful the first time you apply and want to be reconsidered under a new announcement, you must re-apply when the announcement is posted again.

#### **418.3.4.7 Announcements Covering Multiple Grades**

Effective Date – 02/07/2002

\*M/HR/POD may issue announcements covering multiple grades, e.g., GS-07, GS-09, or GS-11, with potential to GS-12. When this happens, M/HR/POD Specialists will include KSAs for each grade level listed on the announcement. You must indicate clearly on your application the grade level(s) of the jobs that are of interest to you. If no grade is indicated on your application, you will be considered for the highest grade matching your qualifications. Following the evaluation process by either a Staffing Specialist, Subject Matter Expert, or Merit Promotion Panel, certificates will be developed for each grade level based on the evaluation process and the candidates who applied. In consultation with the selecting official, a promotion certificate will be issued at all grade levels advertised under the vacancy announcement.

#### **418.3.4.8 Accessing Announcements**

Effective Date – 11/10/1998

To find out about open merit promotion announcements, read the USAID/Washington Notices called *Merit Promotion Information*. These notices list the titles, grades, locations, and closing dates of the jobs available. If you see an announcement that interests you, you can download the full announcement from the HR Internet web site at <http://www.usaid.gov/about/employment/employop.htm>. Copies of announcements may also be picked up in Administrative Management Staff offices or from Specialists in M/HR/POD. Outside applicants may access USAID announcements through the HR Internet web site indicated above or the USOPM job listing at <http://www.usajobs.opm.gov/>.

#### **418.3.4.9 Circulation of Announcements**

Effective Date – 02/07/2002

\*In addition to the regular distribution of announcements, in accord with the [USAID Plan for Increasing Opportunities for Individuals with Disabilities](#) approved by the former Administrator on December 1, 2000, care will be given to circulating external announcements to sources likely to attract people with disabilities. M/HR/POD, in consultation as necessary with EOP, will develop a circulation listing to include state vocational rehabilitation agencies, state employment offices, the Department of Veteran Affairs, colleges, universities, and private and other organizations that work with individuals with disabilities.

**418.3.4.10 Additional Publicity**  
Effective Date – 11/10/1998

Occasionally, USAID will publish job announcements in magazines, newspapers, and professional publications that cater to selected segments of the populations in order to attract a diverse group of candidates throughout all levels of the Agency when the diversity profile of the Agency shows that the Agency workforce does not reflect the American population.

**418.3.4.11 Who may apply?**  
Effective Date – 02/07/2002

If you are in the competitive service or you have eligibility for competitive service positions, you can apply for announcements open in USAID/W, in the commuting area, government-wide, or nationwide.

Remember, for announcements open outside of USAID, you will be competing with interested competitive service employees of other Federal agencies, former Federal employees, individuals with non-competitive eligibility, and individuals from the private sector.

\*Also, a new provision under the Veterans Employment Act of 1998, allows veterans with preference eligibility who have been separated from the armed forces under honorable conditions after three years or more of continuous active service, to apply for vacancies advertised outside of USAID. (See Mandatory References, Veterans Employment Act of 1998 codified in [5 U.S.C. 3304](#), Competitive service; examinations.) Veterans are still eligible for appointment consideration under the Veteran's Readjustment Appointment (VRA) and 30 percent Disabled Veteran Programs appointing authorities.

If you are uncertain about your eligibility to apply, you need to consult with your servicing Human Resources Specialist.

**418.3.4.12 Application Procedures**  
Effective Date – 02/07/2002

\*The General Notice published on February 15, 2000, entitled [Important Change in Merit Promotion Procedures and Training Offered to Assist Employees with the Transition](#) reminded employees of a change in the documentation required for merit promotion consideration which was scheduled to take effect on April 1, 2000. The notice indicated that AID 4-489, Applicant Questionnaire—Merit Promotion, was being cancelled and no longer would be used by the Agency. USAID employees wishing full consideration under the Agency's merit promotion program must now submit an [OF 612](#), Optional Application for Federal Employment, form or other forms USAID considers acceptable (i.e., [SF-171](#), Application for Federal Employment or resume with specific formats) to highlight their experience, education, training, performance, awards, or other information worthy of evaluation. Along with the form, applicants must submit

supplemental statements addressing the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) listed in the announcement and their two most recent performance appraisals.

Other procedures are as follows:

- a. You may send your application via privately owned fax to the fax number listed on the vacancy announcement or hand deliver it directly to the individual identified in the announcement. Your submission, in all cases, must contain the information needed by M/HR/POD to make decisions about your application.
- \* b. Your application must be received on or before the closing date of the announcement any time during the Agency official hours of 8:45 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
- c. Your application will not be accepted if it is incomplete or illegible or mailed or hand delivered in an official Government postage paid envelope.

\*M/HR/POD will use your application package to determine your basic eligibility, qualifications for the position(s) you seek and as a basis for rating and ranking decisions made during that part of the merit promotion process. Failure to follow instructions may result in your application not being considered.

#### **418.3.4.13 Eligibility and Qualifications**

Effective Date – 11/10/1998

As an applicant, you must meet both eligibility to apply and the qualification requirements for the position you are seeking. The qualification standards used for promotion and internal placement state the minimum requirements essential for successful job performance. All applicants who meet these standards and other legal requirements (for example, the time in grade or time after competitive appointment requirements) may be eligible for promotion. Specific information on eligibility and qualification requirements are indicated below:

- a. Eligibility
  - (1) Applicants must meet
    - Time-in-grade requirements as highlighted in [5 CFR 300, Subpart E](#), Time in Grade Restrictions and this chapter. Under this chapter applicants must be within 30 days of meeting time-in-grade requirements on the closing date of the vacancy announcement); and
    - Time after competitive appointment restrictions as required by [5 CFR 330.501](#), General Restrictions on movement after competitive appointment.

(2) Applicants must be willing to accept the terms and requirements of the advertised position and must be within the area of consideration as announced.

(3) If you are serving on temporary or limited appointments in USAID, you are not eligible to apply for competitive service positions unless you have reinstatement or other noncompetitive eligibility (e.g., under an interchange agreement or other appointing authority). However, if USAID is giving concurrent consideration to outside applicants, including those not working for the Government, you may apply as well.

b. Qualifications

(1) M/HR/POD will review your application for qualifications using U.S. [OPM's Operating Manual: Qualification Standards for General Schedule Positions](#) (specifically pages 11-19) or a modified standard developed by the Agency. The modified standard will be included in the vacancy announcement and identified as such.

(2) USAID has the option of using or not using selective factors in vacancy announcements. Selective factors are knowledge, skills, abilities, or special qualifications that are in addition to or more specific than minimum requirements in a qualification standard, but which are determined to be essential to perform the duties and responsibilities of a particular position. If a selective factor(s) appears in an announcement you must meet it to be considered for that particular announcement. Not meeting one selective factor will make you ineligible for further consideration.

(3) Employees will be notified in writing if they are found not qualified for a position, if they did not make the best-qualified list, and if they made the best-qualified list, but were not selected for the position.

**418.3.4.14 Evaluation Methodology**

Effective Date – 11/10/1998

A basic principle of merit promotion is that selection must be from among *the best qualified*. In order to achieve this, our Agency's Merit Promotion Program requires that all eligible applicants be evaluated to determine to what extent their qualifications exceed the minimum requirements. The candidates are then ranked according to their relative merit. Those that rank at the top—usually three to five people—are the *best-qualified* applicants and their names are referred to the selecting official.

Candidates found eligible and qualified will be rated and ranked by a Human Resources Specialist, Subject Matter Expert (SME), or a Merit Promotion Panel as determined by the responsible Human Resources Specialist. (See **418.3.4.13** for information on



eligibility and qualifications.) M/HR/POD will determine appropriate SMEs and panel members.

- The designated SME must have an understanding of the merit promotion evaluation process, and the ability to evaluate applicants objectively. The official must be at the grade level of the position advertised or higher and technically competent in the field of the position(s) being filled.
- If a Merit Promotion Panel is used, M/HR/POD will ensure that panels are representative of the Agency's work force to the extent possible. It will consist of three members, all of whom must be at the grade of the position advertised or higher. At least one member must be technically competent in the field of the position(s) being filled. The two additional members must have some knowledge about the work of the position(s).

Supervisors and selecting officials cannot serve as a Subject Matter Expert or serve on Merit Promotion panels for a job in their organization, but may be called upon to define the position or provide additional information to the SME selected or Merit Promotion Panel established.

Human Resources Management Specialists in M/HR/POD serve as advisors to SMEs and Merit Promotion Panels to ensure consistency and adherence to evaluation procedures. If a Specialist is the rater, his or her supervisor must review and approve the results of his or her evaluation of applicants.

#### **418.3.4.15 Rating and Ranking**

Effective Date – 11/10/1998

The Panel members, SME, or Human Resources Specialist will independently evaluate each candidate's qualifications against the defined levels for each KSA. The rater(s) will review an applicant's total educational and experience background, including performance appraisals, to determine whether he or she possesses the required KSAs. The rater(s) must assign, on a rating sheet, the designated point value for the selected rating level of the KSA. Only the ratings designated in the approved crediting plan may be used; fractional values and zero scores are prohibited. The points for each of the levels are then totaled. (See **418.3.4.1** for information on points)

After the rating process, SMEs, and merit promotion panel members, must discuss significant differences in their ratings of candidates, if any, in the presence of the responsible Human Resources Specialist. The Specialist who serves as the Rater must discuss the same with his or her supervisor. After significant differences in ratings are either reconciled or the reasons documented, the raters' scores for each candidate are totaled by the responsible Specialist. The candidates with the highest scores are ranked as the best-qualified candidates.

Applicants will be assigned total scores, based on the number of KSAs identified in the announcement, as follows:

If four KSAs were identified, the ratings would equal

- 12 points or more = Highly Qualified
- 8 to 11 points = Minimally Qualified or Acceptable

If three KSAs were identified, the total scores would equal

- 9 or more = Highly Qualified
- 6 to 8 points = Minimally Qualified or Acceptable

Promotional candidates for a position announced at multi-grade levels will be evaluated against the crediting plan developed for each grade level for which the applicant is eligible, qualified, and interested.

#### **418.3.4.16 Certification**

Effective Date – 11/10/1998

The responsible Human Resources Specialist prepares a certificate from the results of the rating and ranking process. The certificate developed may be a special selection priority certificate or a promotion certificate.

**a. Who's on a special selection certificate?**

When an agency recruits to fill a vacancy with candidates from outside the agency, it must follow the order of filling vacancies outside the agency's workforce as outlined in [5 CFR 330.705](#). Under these guidelines, the order of selection is current or former employees eligible under the agency's Reemployment Priority List and then current or former Federal employees displaced from other agencies eligible under the Interagency Career Transition Assistance Plan (ICTAP). ICTAP applicants determined to be well qualified for the position are listed on a special selection certificate. The agency must select the ICTAP candidate (s) over any outside candidate who is not eligible for selection priority.

**b. Who's on the promotion certificate?**

The promotion certificate is usually comprised of the top five ranking applicants. If the fifth applicant ties with other competitors, M/HR/POD will include the tied applicants (up to ten) on the selection certificate. When the number of likely referrals exceeds ten, the Deputy Chief, M/HR/POD, must grant permission to add additional names to the certificate.

For announcements with multiple vacancies, all competitors with a rating of highly qualified as indicated in **418.3.4.15** may be referred for selection consideration.

M/HR/POD reserves the option of certifying minimally qualified applicants if highly qualified applicants cannot be identified.

**c.** Are other candidates referred?

Other candidates may be referred on separate certificates attached to the promotion certificate, e.g. candidates who applied for demotion, reassignment, transfer, reinstatement to the position, applicants with non-competitive eligibility or if announced externally, non-status candidates (people who work in the private sector). These candidates will be reviewed for qualifications but are not rated or ranked.

**d.** How are promotion certificates prepared?

M/HR/POD will type the names of the best-qualified applicants for each promotion certificate issued, without scores, and in alphabetical order. Other certificates will be also be typed in alphabetical order.

M/HR/POD will attach application forms of all applicants listed on the certificate(s) and send the completed certificate(s) to the selecting official for consideration.

**418.3.4.17 Selection**

Effective Date – 02/07/2002

\*Following receipt of the selection certificate(s) the selecting official will have a maximum of 15 workdays to interview and make a selection from any one of the certificates issued. If needed, the selecting official must request an extension beyond 15 workdays from the relevant Human Resources Specialist one week before the initial 15 days is due to expire.

a. Promotion Candidate Interviews. All candidates on the promotion certificate must be interviewed if a selection is to be made from the certificate. Telephone interviews may be used when candidates are not located in the commuting area. If a candidate declines or misses an interview and does not call to reschedule, no further consideration will be given to the candidate's application. If a candidate cannot be contacted in a reasonable period, the selecting official must contact M/HR/POD for further guidance.

b. Conducting the Interview. Interviews may be conducted by the selecting officials or employees designated by the supervisor. It is important that applicants be given fair and equal consideration in the interview process. Interviews will be conducted in essentially the same manner for all candidates in

terms of questions used. The selecting official or the employees designated by the supervisor may not show or give preference to any candidate based on factors other than the candidate's qualifications for the job.

c. Responding to the Promotion Certificate(s). If the selecting official chooses an applicant from the promotion certificate, he or she must document the selection in the Date Interviewed/Selected column of the certificate and indicate that all candidates were interviewed, or why an interview was not scheduled. The official returns the certificate to the Administrative Office. The Administrative Office forwards the certificate to M/HR/POD through the Office of Equal Opportunity Programs (EOP) for clearance as described in **418.3.4.18**.

If the selecting official returns the certificate(s) without any candidate (s) chosen, he or she must provide an explanation for his or her action. The selecting official may also

(1) Request the area of consideration be extended to recruit additional candidates;

(2) Fill the vacancy by other means (e.g., rotation, reassignment); or

\* (3) Formally withdraw the request to fill the vacancy, specifying the reason. Upon receipt of a withdrawal, M/HR/POD may deny a subsequent request to fill the same or similar vacancy for at least ninety days or may grant such a request in a period of reorganization, or in situations where there are severe shortages in a skill area, or where there is a critical need.

#### **418.3.4.18 Office of Equal Opportunity Program (EOP) Clearance**

Effective Date – 11/10/1998

It is the Agency's policy that the workforce in the Agency reflects the American population in terms of representation of minorities, women, and individuals with physical disabilities. EOP is charged with ensuring that this profile of America is achieved within the Agency.

To achieve this goal, EOP reviews certificates issued under the merit promotion program to determine the effect of the selection. Based on this review, EOP will either clear or not clear the certificate. The process for EOP's review is as follows:

a. The Bureau/Office having the vacancy will submit the completed certificate(s) to EOP if a selection is made from it.

b. EOP will have five workdays to examine the certificate against the Agency's hiring patterns and make a decision.

c. If EOP is satisfied with the selection, the certificate is returned to M/HR/POD for action.

- d. If EOP is not satisfied that reasonable efforts were made to consider minorities, women, and individuals with physical disabilities, and that there is a negative impact on the profile of the Bureau or Office, EOP will return the certificate within five days, with their findings to the selecting official. EOP will also send copies of their findings to the head of the Bureau or Office concerned and to M/HR/POD.
- e. The selecting official has five working days from the receipt of EOP's dissatisfied response to reconsider his or her proposed selection. After reconsideration if the selecting official reaffirms the proposed selection, with the concurrence of the head of the Bureau/Office concerned, the certificate with appropriate justification will be returned to EOP. If EOP accepts the selecting official's justification, EOP will clear and forward the certificate to M/HR/POD.
- f. If EOP does not agree with the selecting official's justification, EOP will, within five workdays, send the proposed selection and appropriate documentation and comments to the DAA/M/HR for review and decision.
- g. The procedures described in this section (418.3.4.18) which begin on the date EOP receives the certificate with the selection made and end when a transmittal memorandum is sent to the DAA/M/HR for decision, must be completed within fifteen working days. The DAA/M/HR advises EOP of his or her decision.
- h. If EOP is dissatisfied with the DAA's decision, the office may, within five workdays, file a formal appeal with the Deputy Administrator for adjudication. Copies of EOP's submission must be sent to the DAA/M/HR and M/HR/POD.

#### **418.3.4.19 Release of Employees for New Assignment**

Effective Date – 11/10/1998

After EOP clears the selection, the responsible Specialist will request a release date from the supervisor, through the Administrative Office, for candidate(s) selected. Agency employees selected for promotion must be released from their present positions two weeks from the date M/HR/POD requests a release date. Employees selected for reassignment must be released from their present positions thirty days from the date M/HR/POD requests a release date.

#### **418.3.4.20 Additional Certification**

Effective Date – 02/07/2002

If the selected individual (1) declines after being contacted by the Specialist, (2) once appointed submits separation papers (i.e., letter of resignation, retirement papers), (3) or separates (i.e., dies, transfers) from the Agency within sixty calendar days of the initial selection, the certificate used to select that individual may be used again by the selecting official to make a subsequent selection.

\*If one or more similar vacancies arise within an organization within sixty days from the date of an initial selection for which the certificate(s) issued is appropriate, the certificate(s) may be issued again. The new position(s) must

- Be of the same classification series and grade;
- Have the same duties;
- Have the same minimum qualification requirements; and
- The same knowledge, skills, and abilities.

#### **418.3.5 Recordkeeping**

Effective Date – 11/10/1998

USAID must adhere to the policies and procedures regarding recordkeeping contained in [5 CFR 335.103](#), Promotion and Internal Placement, Agency Promotion Programs, b. 5, Requirement 5.

#### **\*418.3.6 Program Evaluation**

Effective Date – 02/07/2002

USAID must adhere to the policy regarding government accountability for merit system principles and workforce information contained in [Executive Order 13197](#), Governmentwide Accountability for Merit Principles Workforce Information.

In this regard, USAID will periodically evaluate the merit promotion program to measure its effectiveness in meeting the policies and procedures established for it. If weaknesses are identified following the program evaluation, M/HR/POD will take the necessary measures to improve guidelines and to ensure full understanding of the promotion system by Agency employees and supervisory/managerial officials.

#### **418.3.7 Grievances**

Effective Date – 11/10/1998

USAID must adhere to the policies and procedures regarding grievances contained in part [5 CFR 335.103 section \(d\)](#), [5 CFR 300, Subpart A](#), and the procedures outlined below in this section.

Before you initiate a grievance under the Agency's negotiated or administrative grievance procedures located in [ADS 490](#) you are encouraged to follow the procedures indicated below:

- a. Schedule an appointment with the relevant M/HR/POD Human Resources Specialist to have questions or concerns about aspects of the merit promotion process in general and/or a specific announcement explained.

b. If you are dissatisfied with the explanation of the relevant Human Resources Specialist, you may ask, in writing, to have the case reviewed by the team leader with oversight for the position. At that time you must also specify the specific relief requested.

c. If you are dissatisfied with the explanation or decision of the team leader, you may ask, in writing, that the Deputy Chief, M/HR/POD, review the promotion action.

d. If you remain dissatisfied with the explanation or decision of the Deputy Chief, you may initiate a grievance under the Agency grievance procedures. (See Mandatory Reference, ADS 490, Agency Administrative Grievance Procedure.)

#### **418.4 MANDATORY REFERENCES**

Effective Date – 11/10/1998

##### **418.4.1 External Mandatory References**

Effective Date – 02/07/2002

- \*a. [5 CFR 6.7, Movement of persons between the civil service and other merit systems](#)
- b. [5 CFR 213.3202, Entire executive civil service](#)
- c. [5 CFR 300, Employment \(General\)](#)
- d. [5 CFR 310, Employment of Relatives](#)
- e. [5 CFR 315, Career and Career Conditional Employment](#)
- f. [5 CFR 330, Recruitment, Selection and Placement \(General\)](#)
- g. [5 CFR 335, Promotion and Internal Placement](#)
- h. [5 CFR 351, Reduction in Force](#)
- i. [5 CFR 410.306, Selection and assignment of trainees](#)
- j. [5 CFR 511.701, Effective dates generally](#)
- \*k. [5 CFR 792, Subpart A, Regulatory Requirements for Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Programs and Services for Federal Civilian Employees](#)
- l. [Executive Order 12292, Foreign Service Act of 1980](#)

- m. [Executive Order 12721, Eligibility of Overseas Employees for Noncompetitive Appointments](#)
- \*n. [Executive Order 13078, Plan to increase the representation of adults with disabilities in the Federal workforce](#)
- \*o. [Executive Order 13162, Federal Career Intern Program](#)
- \*p. [Executive Order 13197, Governmentwide Accountability for Merit Principles Workforce Information](#)
- \*q. [Standard Form \(SF\) 52, Request for Personnel Action](#)
- \*r. [5 U.S.C. Sec 2301, Merit Systems Principles](#)
- s. [U.S. Office of Personnel Management \(OPM\) Operating Manual: Qualification Standards for General Schedule Positions](#)  
[\[http://www.opm.gov/qualifications/index.htm\]](http://www.opm.gov/qualifications/index.htm)
- \*t. [Veteran's Employment Act of 1998 codified as 5 U.S.C. 3304, Competitive service; examination](#)

**418.4.2 Internal Mandatory References**

Effective Date – 02/07/2002

- \*a. [ADS 410, Drug Free Workplace](#)
- \*b. [ADS 432, Details – Civil and Foreign Service](#)
- \*c. [ADS 434, Details to International Organizations](#)
- d. [ADS 452, Reduction in Force – Civil Service](#)
- \*e. [ADS 456, Personnel Operations: Position Classification](#)
- \*f. [ADS 490, Agency Administrative Grievance Procedure](#)
- g. [Agency's Career Transition Assistance Plan](#)
- \*h. [USAID General Notice, Important Change in Merit Promotion Procedures and Training Offered to Assist Employees with the Transition, dated 02/15/00](#)
- \*i. [USAID Plan for Increasing Opportunities for Individuals with Disabilities](#)



**418.5 ADDITIONAL HELP**  
Effective Date – 02/07/2002

- a. [OF 612, Optional Application for Federal Employment](#)
- b. [SF-171, Application for Federal Employment](#)
- \*c. [USAID General Notice, Implementation of Drug Testing at USAID 03/08/2000](#)

**\*418.6 DEFINITIONS**  
Effective Date – 02/07/2002

The terms and definitions listed below have been incorporated into the [ADS Glossary](#). See the ADS Glossary for all ADS terms and definitions.

**accretion of additional duties and responsibilities**

A situation where the incumbent has acquired additional duties and responsibilities, which represent a logical extension of the old job, and which, when fully performed, warrant promotion to a higher grade. (Chapter 418)

**area of consideration**

The area in which the Agency makes a search for eligible candidates in a specific promotion action as determined by the Bureau for Management, Office of Human Resources, Personnel Operations Division (M/HR/POD). The primary area of consideration is USAID. (Chapter 418)

**best-qualified candidates**

Best-qualified candidates are those candidates who rank at the top when compared with other eligible candidates for a position. (Chapter 418)

**career-ladder position**

A position of increasing difficulty in the same line of work through which an employee may progress from a lower or entry level to the level of full performance.

1. Entry Level - The lowest grade level in a career ladder.
2. Full-Performance Level - The last grade reached in a career-ladder position as a result of the original merit promotion action, or as a result of original competitive appointment. (Chapter 418)

**competitive service**

Federal positions normally filled through open competitive examination under civil service rules and regulations. About 60 percent of all Federal positions are in the competitive service. (Chapter 418)

**competitive status**

Basic eligibility of a person to be selected to fill a position in the competitive service without open competitive examination. Competitive status may be acquired by career-conditional or career appointment through open competitive examination, or may be granted by statute, executive order, or civil service rules without competitive examination. A person with competitive status may be promoted, transferred, reassigned, reinstated, or demoted subject to the conditions prescribed by civil service rules and regulations. (Chapter 413 and 418)

**crediting plan**

A plan containing weighted criteria used to measure the value of a candidate's qualifications (e.g., experience, education, training, honors, awards, and outside activities) against the knowledge, skills, abilities (KSAs) and other characteristics required by the vacant or new position. (Chapter 418)

**demotion**

A change of an employee to a lower grade or to a position with a lower rate of pay. (Chapter 418 and 487)

**detail**

The temporary assignment or loan of a direct-hire employee to an outside organization, or within USAID, without change of position from that held in USAID and/or the temporary assignment of non-USAID personnel to USAID, with the expectation that the employee will return to the official position of record upon the expiration of the detail. (Chapter 418 and 432)

**eligible candidates**

Candidates who meet (or will meet within 30 days of the closing date of the vacancy announcement) the Office of Personnel Management or USAID qualification standards for the position, including appropriate selective placement factors and any time-in-grade requirements. (Chapter 418)

**job analysis**

The process of identifying the knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics essential to a position in order to provide a job related basis for evaluation and selection for the position (Chapter 418)

**local commuting area**

The geographic area that usually constitutes one area for employment purposes. It includes any population center (or two or more neighboring ones) and the surrounding localities, in which people live and can reasonably be expected to travel, to their place of employment on a daily basis. (Chapters 418 and 452)

**position change**

A promotion, demotion, or reassignment made during an employee's continuous service (within the same Federal agency) that establishes the employee's eligibility for grade

retention (5 U.S.C. 5362). A position change may also involve a change of official headquarters or post of duty within the Agency. (Chapter 418)

**priority consideration**

A noncompetitive opportunity for selection to a new or vacant position granted to a qualified employee who failed to receive proper consideration for selection for an equivalent position under another vacancy announcement. (Chapter 418)

**promotion**

The change of an employee to a position at a higher grade level within the same job classification system and pay schedule or to a position with a higher rate of basic pay in a different job classification system and pay schedule. (Chapter 418)

**\*promotion certificate**

The form used to send the names of the best-qualified candidates being considered for promotion or subject to competitive selection procedures to the selecting official for consideration and to document his or her selection decisions. (Chapter 418)

**promotion potential**

The promotion potential of any position is the highest grade to which a person may be promoted without additional competition for the position. There are ordinarily two situations where positions have promotion potential. One is any position within an established career ladder below the full performance level. The other is any position filled below the established grade (not necessarily in a career ladder) for training or developmental purposes, e.g., trainee and understudy. (Chapter 418)

**\*qualification requirements**

Education, experience, and other prerequisites to employment or placement in a position. The Office of Personnel Management's Operating Manual for Qualifications Standards for General Schedule Positions or modified Agency standards, is used to determine basic qualifications of applicants for a specific position. (Chapter 418)

**qualified candidates**

Qualified candidates are those being considered for any competitive placement action who meet all established minimum eligibility and qualification requirements for the position. (Chapter 418)

**quality ranking factors**

Quality ranking factors are knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs), identified on the vacancy announcement for the positions to be filled, that could be expected to significantly enhance performance in a position, but unlike selective factors, are not essential for satisfactory performance. (For example, skill in public speaking might be used as a quality-ranking factor for a position in an organization where policy changes are communicated to the public in several ways and oral communication is one of the ways.) (Chapter 418)

**reassignment**

The change of an employee from one position to another without promotion or demotion. (Chapter 418)

**\*Reemployment rights**

Rehire rights granted to a former Agency employee(s) when hired by another executive agency without a break in service of a full workday by transfer, reinstatement, or by excepted appointment, in a position which the agency is currently authorized to fill with reemployment rights. (Chapters 412 and 418)

**Reinstatement eligibility**

Eligibility of a person who previously was employed under a career or career-conditional appointment to be reappointed to a competitive service position. (Chapters 413 and 418)

**selecting official**

The individual responsible for making a careful analysis of the qualifications of each candidate certified for a vacancy and judging which candidate could perform best in the job to be filled. (Chapter 418)

**Selective Factors**

Specific knowledge, skills, and abilities essential for satisfactory performance on the job and which represent an addition to the basic qualification standards for a position. (Chapter 418)

**\*special selection priority certificate**

A certificate used to refer candidates qualified under the Interagency Career Transition Assistance Plan to selecting officials.

**Subject Matter Expert (SME)**

An individual selected to evaluate candidates and establish the candidate's relative merit for promotion to the targeted position. He or she must be competent in the technical areas of the position. (Chapter 418)

**temporary promotion**

The Agency makes time-limited promotions to fill temporary positions, accomplish project work, fill positions temporarily pending reorganization or downsizing, or meet other temporary needs for a specified period of not more than five years. Longer periods may be authorized by Office of Personnel Management. (Chapter 418)

**trainee position**

A position involving a well-defined training program established for a career or career conditional employee of a definite duration. The training may be on-the-job or formal training. Assigned tasks are performed on a rotating or non-rotating basis and under close guidance and instruction, with promotion scheduled upon satisfactory completion

of the training period. A trainee who does not satisfactorily complete the training period will be reassigned to a different position. (Chapter 418)

**transfer**

The employment of a career or career-conditional employee, when the employee moves from one agency to another (with or without promotion) without a break in service of one full workday. (Chapter 418)

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