

Reclamation Manual

Policy

Subject: Federal Career Intern Program

Purpose: Sets forth Reclamation policy and procedures that apply to administering the Federal Career Intern Program.

Authority: Executive Order 13162; Title 5, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Section 213.3202(o) and Part 315, Subparts B and G; and DOI Personnel Bulletin No. 02-6 (213/315)

Contact: Human Resources Policy Management Team

1. **Purpose.** In accordance with Executive Order 13162, the Federal Career Intern Program (FCIP) is designed to attract exceptional men and women to the Federal workforce who have diverse professional experiences, academic training, and competencies, to prepare them for careers in public service. Throughout the 2-year internship, individuals will participate in a formal training program and job assignments to develop competencies appropriate to the Bureau of Reclamation's mission and needs.
2. **Scope.** This program may be utilized to fill positions at grades GS-5, 7, and 9 levels or equivalent trainee (including one-grade interval) positions in which a 2-year formal training program is appropriate.
 - A. For GS-5 and 7 positions that are covered by the Luevano Consent Decree, you must use the appropriate Administrative Careers with America (ACWA) assessment or rating schedule when filling these positions. Human Resource Offices, who have received approval to test for these positions, may use their existing Office of Personnel Management (OPM) ACWA examining authority, partner with another servicing Human Resource Office, or contract with OPM. Information on the Luevano Consent Decree and covered positions can be found on the OPM Web site at <http://www.opm.gov/employ/luevano.htm>.
 - B. Positions may be filled at other trainee levels with OPM approval. Requests must be forwarded to the Human Resources Division Manager.
3. **Responsibilities.**
 - A. **Human Resources Division Manager.** The Human Resources Division Manager is responsible for ensuring Reclamation-wide policy and procedures are developed and maintained for administration of the FCIP.
 - B. **Servicing Human Resource Officers.** Servicing Human Resource Officers are responsible for carrying out the policies and procedures of the program and will provide

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guidance and advice to management. They will also ensure that the acceptance of applications and hiring are consistent with merit system principles.

- C. **Managers and Supervisors.** Managers and Supervisors are responsible for implementing and documenting the training program for participants and providing information to the employee of what is expected during the internship, including developmental assignments and performance requirements.

4. Program Overview.

- A. **Appointments.** Appointments are made using the Schedule B authority cited in 5 CFR 213.3202(0). The procedures described in 5 CFR 302, Employment in the Excepted Service, will also be followed when making appointments under this program.
- B. **Recruitment Sources.** A variety of sources may be utilized to locate candidates. Public notice/advertisement is not required; however, selections must be based on merit principles and ensure equal employment opportunity.
- C. **Veterans Preference.** Veterans' preference applies to selections under the FCIP. Since Career Interns are appointed to positions in the excepted service, procedures described in 5 CFR 302, Employment in the Excepted Service, must be followed.
- D. **Pay Retention.** If a current career or career-conditional Federal employee applies for and is selected to participate in the FCIP, and acceptance of the employment offer results in a change to lower grade, this is considered a management action that entitles the employee to mandatory pay retention or the use of the maximum payable rate rule.
- E. **Written Agreement.** All interns will sign a written agreement acknowledging that they understand the requirements of the program. In addition, for career and career-conditional Reclamation employees, agreements will include a statement that they understand they are leaving the competitive service voluntarily to accept an appointment in the excepted service.
- F. **Training and Development Plan.** All employees appointed to the FCIP must have a formal training and development plan that will cover the entire developmental period (2 years unless extended). Managers/Supervisors in coordination with the servicing Human Resources Office are responsible for developing these formal plans.
- G. **Promotions.** During the internship period, individuals participating in the program may receive promotions provided they meet all qualifications and eligibility requirements necessary for promotion, and have successfully completed applicable training requirements. Time-in-grade restrictions do not apply to excepted service

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positions; however, the intern must meet all qualification requirements (i.e., 1-year experience equivalent to the next lower grade in the Federal service. This also includes individuals participating in accelerated training programs).

- H. **Tenure Group.** FCIP interns are in the excepted service Tenure Group II for purposes of 5 CFR 351.502, Reduction in Force, Retention Standing.
- I. **Trial Period.** FCIP interns are in a trial period during the entire period of internship. Continuation in the program is contingent upon satisfactory performance by the intern throughout the internship period. FCIP interns are not required to serve a probationary period following their conversion to the competitive service.
- J. **Extensions.** Human Resource Officers may approve requests for extending a 2-year internship for up to an additional 120 days to cover rare or unusual circumstances. Extensions may be granted when, due to unforeseen developments, a permanent position is not immediately available, or when the intern is not fully prepared for conversion to a permanent appointment, and there is an expectation that these circumstances will abate within 120 days. The approval, with specific reasons for the extension, must be documented in writing and retained with the placement and formal training file. Extensions beyond 120 days must be approved by OPM.
- K. **Conversion to Competitive Service.** Service as an FCIP intern shall confer no rights to further Federal employment in either the competitive or excepted service upon the expiration of the internship period.
- (1) Competitive civil service status may be granted to FCIP interns who successfully complete their internships and meet all qualification, suitability and performance requirements.
 - (a) These non-competitive conversions will be effective on the date the internship period is successfully completed, or at the end of the extended period, if applicable.
 - (b) Service under the FCIP counts toward career tenure in the competitive service, if the intern is converted to a career-conditional appointment under 5 CFR 315.712.
 - (2) A Reclamation employee who held a career or career-conditional appointment immediately before entering the FCIP program, and who fails to complete the program for reasons unrelated to misconduct or suitability, will be placed in a career or career-conditional position within Reclamation at no lower grade or pay than the one he/she left to accept the FCIP position.

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- (3) For employees who move from one bureau to another to accept a position as an FCIP intern and fail to complete the program for reasons unrelated to misconduct or suitability will not have placement entitlements to another position in the employing bureau. Likewise, an intern selected from another Federal agency will not have placement entitlement.

- L. **Terminations.** Unless converted to a competitive service appointment, an intern must be terminated from Federal service or returned to a position at the same grade and pay as previously held within Reclamation, not later than 2 years from the date he/she was appointed to the FCIP position, or at the end of an extended period, if applicable.