

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
DEPARTMENTAL MANUAL

Personnel

370 DM Addition to FPM

Recruitment, Selection, and
Chapter 330 Placement (General)

370 DM 330.1.1

Subchapter 1. Filling Vacancies

1.1 Policy. In recruiting for entrance-level positions, it is Departmental policy to recruit the best-qualified individuals available from all sources. In recruiting for positions above the entrance level, it is Departmental policy that vacancies shall be filled by the promotion of well-qualified Department employees to the maximum extent feasible, consistent with the best interests of management. (See 370 DM 335). Section 310 of the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 required the establishment of the Federal Equal Opportunity Recruitment Program (FEORP) aimed at eliminating the underrepresentation of minorities and women. FEORP is a targeted recruitment program to ensure that the workforce reflects the diversity which exists in the nation as a whole. Recruitment programs will be conducted on a systematic basis to locate and attract well-qualified applicants, without discrimination because of race, color, ethnic group, religious beliefs, sex, age, physical handicap, political beliefs or other personal characteristics having no bearing on applicants' fitness for employment.

1.2 Departmental Vacancy Information System. In order to provide vacancy information to all Department employees, the Office of Personnel (PPM) has established the Departmental Vacancy Information System (DVIS). The DVIS provides a mechanism to advertise all Departmental vacancies at the GS-9 level and above, and hard to fill lower grade vacancies at the option of the bureaus.

A. The DVIS contains the following information for each vacancy:

(1) Name of Bureau or Office.

(2) Address and telephone number of personnel office submitting vacancy information.

(3) Vacancy announcement number, position title, grade and series, geographic location, organizational designation (e.g., division, branch or office), closing date, telephone number of personnel office servicing the vacancy; and any additional information such as upward mobility opportunity, grade potential, or any special restrictions.

B. Bureaus must submit the vacancy information to PPM in the prescribed format by the close of business each Tuesday either in writing or by telephone. Appendix 1 to this Chapter provides a sample of the required format. If written lists are used, they must be consolidated by bureau headquarters prior to submission to PPM. Field offices may telephone the information in direct.

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C. The procedure for telephoning the information is as follows:

(1) Dial FTS 8-343-2068. A recorded message will be heard.

(2) Please have your information well prepared in advance. The recording mechanism is voice-activated and will shut off after ten (10) seconds of silence. If you pause for five (5) seconds a soft continuous buzz will be heard. If you begin speaking during the next five (5) seconds, the buzzing will stop and the recording will continue. If you do not, a loud ring will sound as a signal that the recorder has shut off. Should the latter occur, hang up, redial, reidentify your bureau or office and indicate that you are continuing your list of vacancies.

(3) When you have completed your list, please identify your bureau or office and give the date (e.g., "End of Bureau of Mines Vacancy List. July 31, 1981."). Hang up receiver and the process is complete.

1.3 Departmental Career Placement Assistance Program.

A. Purpose and Scope. This part establishes the Departmental Career Placement Assistance Program (DCPA) to facilitate Departmentwide placement opportunities for employees of the Department who are eligible under the Program eligibility specifications. DCPA is established as a supplement to bureau and Office of Personnel Management (OPM) placement programs, and does not negate or compensate for other Department or OPM placement assistance requirements.

B. Policy. DCPA provisions and requirements are generally applicable for all eligibles and to all available positions without regard to eligibles' race, color, sex, age, religion, national origin, nondisqualifying physical handicaps, or any other non-merit factor except when Indian preference is required by law in filling designated positions. When required, Indian preference is mandatory. Bureaus will provide placement assistance to DCPA eligibles by assuring that they receive appropriate priority in consideration for positions in occupations for which they are registered and qualified.

C. Definitions. The following terms have the meaning indicated when they are used in the DCPA:

(1) Eligible. A current or former employee of the Department who is appropriately registered for placement assistance as indicated in the DCPA eligibility specifications.

(2) Current Grade Level. An eligible's last nontemporary grade level in the position from which his/her current DCPA eligibility resulted.

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(3) Available Position. A continuing position in any Department activity for which recruitment is initiated.

(4) Continuing Position. An unencumbered, uncommitted full-time or part-time position in the competitive service without a known termination date. This includes competitive positions temporarily filled by TAPER, temporary appointment, or temporary promotion.

(5) Category I. The highest priority placement category under the DCPA. It comprises eligibles who applied for the DCPA after receiving a specific reduction-in-force notice of separation from competitive career or career-conditional employment. Category I eligibles have the first priority for placement under the DCPA.

(6) Category II. The category of current employees of the Department who are eligible for the DCPA based on reasons other than separation from the competitive service by reduction in force. Category II is divided into two parts, Category IIA and Category IIB. Category IIA is a higher priority category than Category IIB. Category IIA and Category IIB are explained in 370 DM 330,1.3E(2) and 370 DM 330,1.3E(3), respectively.

(7) A Valid Offer. The offer of a continuing position by a Department activity which meets any grade level and location for which an eligible is registered in the DCPA, provided the offer includes payment of travel and transportation expenses either by the gaining or losing activity when relocation is required (if legally permissible); and the work schedule of the position offered is the same as or higher than that of the position from which DCPA eligibility resulted.

(8) Local Commuting Area. The definition in FPM Chapter 351, Subchapter 1-4b(5) applies for the DCPA.

D. Basic Requirements. In filling continuing positions at grade levels and geographic locations for which qualified DCPA candidates are available, Department activities must ensure that they receive appropriate priority in consideration for placement. When there is a qualified DCPA eligible for the position, a continuing position may not be filled by transfer, a new appointment, or reemployment of a person who is not a DCPA eligible unless the person is on a Department of the Interior Reemployment Priority List (RPL), or is reemployed or restored under Part 352 or Part 353 of the OPM regulations; or such action is approved by the Director of Personnel. Selections under the DCPA must not conflict with veteran preference requirements which apply to Department RPLs established under OPM requirements.

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E. Eligibility Specifications. The DCPA is a broad placement program available to eligibles for a variety of reasons. Participants are registered under categories to indicate their priority for placement under the Program and why they are registered. Qualified eligibles must be considered for all available positions which are filled at their current grade level and any lower grade level for which they are registered. Eligibles from full-time positions are required to be considered only for full-time positions; eligibles from other than full-time positions are required to be considered only for other than full-time positions. Eligibility for assistance under all DCPA categories is limited to two (2) years, as determined by the Office of Personnel. Eligibles must be considered by category priority order, consistent with DCPA requirements and provisions.

(1) Category I. Competitive career and career-conditional employees of the Department are eligible for Category I placement assistance if they apply for the DCPA within 30 calendar days after the date they receive a specific reduction-in-force notice of separation. An eligible's entitlement to Category I placement assistance terminates if:

(a) The eligible accepts or declines any valid offer of a position, or requests removal from the DCPA, or

(b) The eligible declines consideration by any Department activity for a continuing position at a grade level and location for which he/she is registered; or fails to appropriately reply to a written inquiry on availability for such a job, or

(c) The eligible accepts any continuing position in the Federal service, or

(d) The eligible is not placed by two (2) years from the time he/she is registered in the DCPA, or

(e) The entitlement is suspended or cancelled by the Office of Personnel for any reason.

(2) Category IIA. Whenever any employee of the Department is entitled to grade and pay retention under Part 536 of the OPM regulations, the employee is entitled to registration for placement assistance under Category IIA. Bureaus must undertake to register their grade and pay retention employees in the DCPA. An eligible's entitlement to Category IIA placement assistance ends if:

(a) The eligible's entitlement to grade or pay retention under Part 536 of the OPM regulations ends, or

(b) The eligible separates from employment with the Department, or

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(c) The entitlement is suspended or cancelled by the Office of Personnel for any reason.

(3) Category IIB. When they are within 90 days or less of satisfying their employee service agreement, competitive career and career-conditional employees of the Department assigned outside the 50 United States and the District of Columbia may apply and be eligible for placement assistance under Category IIB if they want DCPA help to return to the Continental United States.

(a) A Category IIB eligible's entitlement to Category IIB placement assistance terminates upon the occurrence of any of the events as described in 370 DM 330,1.3E(1)(a), (b), (d), and (e).

(b) A Category IIB eligible's entitlement to Category IIB placement assistance will also terminate if the eligible applies for and obtains any other Federal position outside the Continental United States.

F. Responsibilities.

(1) The Office of Personnel (PPM). PPM is responsible for overall supervision of DCPA operations and generally facilitating the accomplishment of Program objectives. PPM will:

(a) Establish listings on DCPA eligibles and their availability.

(b) Designate a DCPA Coordinator to assist bureau personnel office DCPA contacts.

(c) Institute procedural adjustments as deemed necessary to maintain Program effectiveness.

(d) Decide any questions and exceptions relating to DCPA requirements and provisions.

(2) Bureau Headquarters. Bureau headquarters are responsible for assuring bureauwide compliance with DCPA requirements and provisions. Each bureau headquarters personnel office will:

(a) Designate a bureau coordinator for the DCPA to serve as a central point of contact for the Program in the bureau.

(b) Coordinate and monitor DCPA operations bureauwide.

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(c) Advise PPM on overall Program operations.

(3) Bureau Servicing Personnel Offices (SPO). Each SPO is responsible for:

(a) Designating at least one DCPA contact to assist employees who may register in the Program and other personnel offices on DCPA related matters.

(b) Ensuring that all available positions are processed consistent with DCPA requirements.

(c) Making initial determinations regarding employee eligibility for the Program, counseling employees, and processing DCPA registrations in accordance with DCPA eligibility specifications and procedures.

(d) Advising the DCPA Coordinator (PPM) promptly of any known discrepancy or error in a DCPA publication or registration.

(4) Employee Obligations. Applicants for the Program and eligibles must cooperate with and keep their servicing personnel office advised of a current address and telephone number where they can be contacted. They must notify such office immediately if for some reason they are not available to accept employment, or if they decide to withdraw as a participant in the Program. Eligibles may be dropped from the Program if they do not meet these obligations.

G. Registration. Only employees who are willing to accept employment in any Department activity should apply for the DCPA. All eligibles may apply for up to three (3) occupational series for which they qualify, and one (1) grade level which does not exceed their current grade level. Category I and Category IIB applicants may specify up to three (3) geographical areas where they are available to work. Category I and Category IIB applicants who do not specify geographical areas will be considered for available positions throughout the Continental United States. A Category IIA applicant may be registered for consideration only in the local commuting area of his/her position of record, except when eligibility has resulted in conjunction with a position change to a new commuting area (e.g., in lieu of separation, a GS-13 accepts a GS-12 in a different commuting area). Under such conditions, a Category IIA eligible may elect to be registered for positions in the local commuting area from which the change occurred or in the local commuting area of his/her current assignment, but only for one. No eligible may restrict his/her consideration within a local commuting area.

(1) Prerequisites. It is important that all potential DCPA applicants be counseled concerning entitlements, obligations, and requirements under the Program. They should be advised of the reality that registration carries no guarantee of placement, and applicants should not be encouraged to

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expect contacts immediately after they register. Upon completion of the counseling, the following papers must be collected for each person to be registered:

- (a) An up-to-date SF-171.
- (b) A current written supervisory performance appraisal.
- (c) An appropriately completed Career Placement Assistance Application, Form DI-1832.
- (d) A copy of any specific reduction-in-force notice or notice of position downgrading issued to the employee.
- (e) A copy of the RPL on which the employee has been listed, if the registration is for Category I.

(2) Processing. All applications for the DCPA must be submitted through servicing personnel offices (SPOs). SPOs will ensure that they are appropriate and complete. To complete the registration of an applicant, a personnel office must submit the forms needed by the Office of Personnel to the DCPA Coordinator, Office of Personnel (PPM), Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240. The Career Placement Assistance Application, Form DI-1832, for each applicant for Category I and Category IIB must be signed by both a representative of the applicant's SPO and the applicant to be acceptable for registration. Employee signatures on Forms DI-1832 are desirable but not required in registration for Category IIA. Documents are handled as follows:

- (a) Category I. Registration requires the appropriate submission of all documents indicated in 370 DM 330,1.3G(1).
- (b) Category IIA. Forward to PPM only a copy of the applicant's Career Placement Assistance Application, Form DI-1832. The SPO must maintain copies of all documents specified in 370 DM 330,1.3G(1) and furnish them when requested by other SPO's for consideration for available positions.
- (c) Category IIB. Registration requires the appropriate submission of all documents indicated in 370 DM 330,1.3G(1).

H. Consideration and Selection of DCPA Eligibles. For each month, the Office of Personnel (PPM) will establish and distribute information on the current listing of DCPA eligibles. Servicing personnel offices are responsible for ensuring further distribution of this information to all offices under their jurisdiction which exercise appointing authority. DCPA Lists will

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show eligibles by placement assistance categories of the DCPA; occupational series, grade levels, and geographic locations for which they are registered; and other information as determined by PPM. When there is an available position, information on the most current DCPA List will be reviewed to determine if there are eligibles who must be considered. If there are, the eligibles' application papers will be requested, and they will be afforded appropriate consideration for placement, consistent with the DCPA Basic Requirements (370 DM 330,1.3D).

(1) Applications of Category I and Category IIB eligibles are available from the Office of Personnel and may be requested by telephone. (See the DCPA List for the telephone contact.)

(2) Applications for Category IIA eligibles are available from their servicing personnel offices, as shown on the DCPA Lists.

I. Management Prerogatives and Other Considerations. There is no requirement under the DCPA that any vacant position must be filled or that eligibles must be selected when job vacancies for which they are qualified and available are filled. The limitations of the Basic Requirements (370 DM 330,1.3D) do not preclude filling positions with Department employees not in the DCPA by position change actions (e.g., reassignments, demotions, promotions), so long as DCPA eligibles are considered as appropriate.

(1) DCPA candidates may be selected noncompetitively for lateral reassignment, placement in positions at a lower grade, or (consistent with merit staffing provisions) promotion.

(2) If a continuing position is announced under merit promotion procedures and there is a qualified DCPA candidate available to fill it, the eligible must be considered. This is required irrespective of the area of consideration stated in the vacancy announcement and even when the eligible does not specifically apply in response to the vacancy announcement. The servicing personnel office with responsibility for the position vacancy will obtain the applications of available eligibles, enter them into the case file, and assure that they are considered consistent with the Basic Requirements (370 DM 330,1.3D).

(3) When a continuing position is announced under merit promotion procedures at multiple grade levels (e.g., 5,7,9), there is no requirement that the position must be filled at a grade level for which a DCPA candidate is available; and DCPA Basic Requirements apply at the grade level at which the position is filled. There is no provision under the DCPA that eligibles must be considered for positions when filled at grades higher than their current grade level. However, if a continuing position with grade potential higher than the current grade level of a qualified and available eligible is filled at the eligible's current grade level or a lower grade level for which he/she is registered in the DCPA, the eligible must be considered for the job; but any qualified candidate may be selected.

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(4) When an eligible is registered for consideration in any specified geographical location, the location is interpreted to include the local commuting area for the location specified. No eligible may limit his/her consideration within the local commuting area of a specified location.

(5) The provision in the Basic Requirements (370 DM 330,1.3D) relative to authority of the Director of Personnel to approve exceptions to provisions and requirements of the DCPA anticipates that there may be infrequent and unusual circumstances when exceptions not otherwise provided might be warranted. The provision is not intended for routine use as a mechanism to bypass qualified eligibles based solely on showing in specific instances that DCPA eligibles are not so well qualified as someone else. Any request to PPM from a bureau for exception from DCPA requirements is appropriately submitted in writing through its headquarters personnel officer; should state specifically and in detail all reasons for the request, and must identify the DCPA eligible(s) and position(s) involved, any proposed selectee; and indicate whether there is any eligible on an applicable Department RPL who is available for the job.

(6) An employee who is separated because he/she declines to transfer with his/her function is not eligible for Category I placement assistance.

J. Salary and Pay.

(1) Highest Previous Rate. When an eligible who is not entitled to grade and pay retention (5 CFR 536) is placed through the DCPA, he/she will have his/her pay fixed in the new grade at a step which preserves, as far as possible, his/her last earned rate which was not from a temporary or term promotion.

(2) Pay Retention. When an eligible is placed and is entitled to pay retention or grade and pay retention (5 CFR 536), it must be afforded.

K. Payment of Relocation Expenses. As a general rule, the losing office will pay the applicable travel and transportation expenses. However, arrangements may be made, through negotiation between the gaining and losing offices, for cost sharing of travel expenses.

L. Records. Servicing personnel offices will maintain a record on each employee applicant they register in the DCPA. The record will be maintained until one year after the applicant is removed from the program and contain a copy of all documents listed in 370 DM 330,1.3G(1), a notation of the dates the employee was counseled on the DCPA, and the names of persons who counseled the employee on the Program.

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Subchapter 3. Displaced Employee Program

3.1 Policy. The rights and privileges accorded Federal employees under the Displaced Employee Program shall be observed throughout the Department. Displaced employees will be given all possible assistance in continuing their employment in the Federal service.

3.2 Bureau Responsibility. Bureaus will be responsible for giving bona fide consideration when filling vacancies to displaced employees of other Federal agencies whose names and qualifications are circulated by the Office of Personnel Management through its Displaced Employee Program lists, including vacancies for positions which are ordinarily filled by promotion or reassignment from within. Bureaus need not, however, give consideration to displaced employees when filling positions with personnel who have a previously established right; for example, an employee exercising statutory, regulatory, or administrative reemployment rights; an employee being restored to a position after finding by competent authority that his/her demotion or separation was unjustified or unwarranted; an employee entitled to reassignment in lieu of separation by reduction in force; or employees on the Department's reemployment priority list being recalled to duty.

Departmental Vacancy Information System List

(To be used for both written and telephone lists)

Bureau of Land Management Washington, D.C., Division of Personnel,
(202)343-5427

WO-80-175, District Manager, GS-340-13, Las Cruces, New Mexico, Las Cruces District Office. 12/24/80, (505) 329-1485.

WO-81-178, Office Services Manager, GS-342-9/10, Silver Spring, Maryland, Maryland District Office. 01/22/81, (301) 585-3162, Upward Mobility Opportunity.

WO-81-182, Accounting Officer, GS-510-13, Washington, D.C., Office of the Assistant Director, Administration. 01/14/81, (202) 343-5427.

