



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Office of  
Human Capital  
Management

# Presidential Management Fellows Guide



July 2008

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Program Description . . . . .	1
Purpose . . . . .	1
Structure . . . . .	1
Program Benefits for Fellows . . . . .	1
How to Get Nominated for the Program . . . . .	1
Who to Contact for More Information . . . . .	2
Elements . . . . .	2
Position Placement . . . . .	2
Rotations . . . . .	2
Individual Development Plans . . . . .	3
Training . . . . .	3
Presidential Management Fellows Forums and Action Learning Teams. . . . .	4
Agency Specific Information . . . . .	4
Agency PMF Coordinator . . . . .	5
Agency PMF Supervisors . . . . .	5
Mentors . . . . .	6
Program References . . . . .	6



# PRESIDENTIAL MANAGEMENT FELLOWS PROGRAM GUIDE

## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Presidential Management Fellows (PMF) Program is the Federal Government's premiere program for bringing persons with advanced degrees into Federal Service. It was established by Executive Order 13318 on November 21, 2003. It transformed the Presidential Management Intern Program into the more flexible PMF Program. The program is designed to attract to the Federal service outstanding individuals from a wide variety of academic disciplines who have an interest in, and commitment to, a career in public service. By drawing graduate students from diverse social and cultural backgrounds, the PMF Program provides a continuing source of trained men and women to meet the future challenges of public service. The PMF Program is an excellent source of high potential candidates for management and program analysts.

## PURPOSE

The PMF Program is designed to provide the Federal Government with a pool of well qualified and well-trained future supervisors, managers, and executives by recruiting individuals with Master's and Doctor's degrees and providing them with a concentrated, varied, and accelerated training experience, both inside and outside their sponsoring agency.

## STRUCTURE

Fellows are hired at the GS-9, GS-11, or GS-12 level with Excepted Service appointment status for the beginning of their two-year fellowship. **(However, USDA normally hires PMF's at the GS-9 level.)** Following satisfactory completion of the first year, they are eligible for promotion to the GS-11 level. After the second year, they are eligible for conversion to career or career-conditional status at the GS-11 or GS-12 level, depending on their total length of service, and the career potential of their position. PMF's can also receive accelerated promotions in a manner consistent with USDA's PMF Promotion Plan.

## PROGRAM BENEFITS FOR FELLOWS

- Excellent salary
- Fast track employment
- Vacation, holidays, and sick leave
- Major medical, dental and life insurance
- A retirement plan and investment plan



## HOW TO GET NOMINATED FOR THE PROGRAM

Graduate students interested in entering the PMF Program should contact the



appropriate dean or other official at their college or university to request nomination. Graduate students from all academic disciplines who expect to complete an advanced degree from a qualifying college or university by August 31 of the academic year in which the competition is held, are eligible to become Fellows.

### **WHO TO CONTACT FOR MORE INFORMATION**

Students interested in working for USDA may contact the USDA PMF Program Managers who are listed on the Internet at <http://www.usda.gov/da/employ/pmfcor.htm>. Students and school officials who would like additional information may contact the OPM, PMF Office in Washington, D.C. at [pmf@opm.gov](mailto:pmf@opm.gov). Also, information on the PMF Program may be obtained from OPM's PMF Home Page on the Internet at: [www.pmf.opm.gov](http://www.pmf.opm.gov). Students attending the 1890 Land Grant Institutions, Tuskegee University, California State University - Fresno, California State University - San Bernardino, Miami-Dade College, North Campus, and the University of New Mexico - Albuquerque may also contact the USDA Liaison Officer at their school for further information.

### **ELEMENTS**

The Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Parts 213.3102 (ii), and 315.708 contain guidelines for agencies to follow in administering the PMF Program. Four major Program elements are summarized below and include:

- Position Placement
- Rotations
- Individual Learning Agreement
- Training

Taken together, these elements enable the Federal Government, the agency, and the fellow to reap benefits not generally available through other recruitment and training programs.

#### **Position Placement**

PMF Supervisors normally place PMF's in positions which allow for professional growth, and which offer potential for advancement following completion of the program. PMF's are likewise normally placed in positions with the flexibility to incorporate rotations and other professional developmental activities.

#### **Rotations**



Job rotations (details) are an integral part of the PMF Program. They are often used to allow Fellows to gain a broader perspective of the Executive Branch of the Federal Government. Rotations to a variety of offices within the fellow's agency, or within



USDA provide excellent opportunities for training in the five mentioned management areas. Rotations may also occur within another Federal agency, congressional offices, or state or local governments; however, rotations within USDA are preferred. Both the home agency and the Fellow benefit from the experience and contacts made during rotational assignments.

### **Individual Development Plans**

The development of the Individual Development Plans (IDP) is an important part of the 2-year fellowship. The IDP process helps to make the fellowship a positive experience for both the agency and the fellow. Each PMF is required to develop an IDP with assistance from his or her supervisor. The IDP must contain specific descriptions of assignments and learning objectives, and incorporate other elements of the program such as rotations, career development group participation, and training events. An IDP should be considered a vital and flexible planning document to be reviewed periodically and revised as appropriate.

### **Training**

Development Assignment - Hiring agencies are to provide Fellows with at least one full time developmental assignment of at least four to six months during the fellowship in a functional area related to the Fellow's target position. A Fellow's rotation may or may not meet this requirement.

The PMF Program Office works with agencies and Fellows who sponsor PMF Forums and Action Learning Team hours which serve as part of the PMF's required training. In addition to the knowledge, skills, and experience, and other types of training fellows will gain in the agency, OPM sponsors a career development component, which is part of two residential seminars:

- PMF Program Orientation Training (beginning of first year)
- End-of-Program Graduation Training (end of second year)

Fees for the OPM training are included in the payments agencies provide to OPM. The only additional expense would be for travel expenses that may be necessary. Fellows should include the residential training with other training in their IDP's. Fellows should take advantage of the two OPM offerings.

Beginning with the 1997 Class, agencies were required to provide 80 hours of formal training each year of the fellowship. However, OPM's orientation training will count for 24 hours of formal training for the first year, and the graduation program will count for 16 hours in the second year. Agencies will, therefore, have to provide the additional 56 hours of formal training in the first year and the 64 hours of formal training in the second year.

## **PMF Forums and Action Learning Teams**

The PMF Program Office works with agencies and Fellows who sponsor PMF Forums and Action Learning Teams which serve as part of the PMF's enrichment. The general objectives of PMF Forums and Action Learning Teams are:

- To provide PMF's with the insights and views of top level Government managers
- To give PMF's a forum for the free exchange of ideas and opinions with officials inside and outside the Federal Government
- To allow fellows to study and analyze managerial issues from a variety of perspectives
- To encourage development of interpersonal and leadership skills necessary to work effectively in groups
- To increase awareness of critical managerial and career development decisions facing fellows now and in the future
- To stimulate a commitment to personal and professional development and continued learning through regular interaction with peers and fellow Federal employees



USDA agencies are strongly encouraged to support PMF's participation in PMF Forums and Action Learning Teams, and to draw on the interagency contacts developed by the fellow as a result of his or her involvement.

## **AGENCY SPECIFIC INFORMATION**

Specific implementation of the PMF Program will vary from agency to agency. The guidelines in the 5 CFR, 362 are based upon OPM's interpretation of the intent of the founding E.O. 12008, and of E.O. 12364. These guidelines should be incorporated within the structure of the individual agency program whenever possible. Your agency PMF Coordinator will be able to provide you with information on specific requirements.



## **Agency PMF Coordinator**

Agency PMF Coordinators are vital to the success of the program. Agency PMF Coordinators normally will be on staff with the agency operating the human resources office or with the human resources office that services your agency. Agency PMF Coordinators perform the following important functions:

- Liaison between the agency and the Department PMF Program Manager
- Assist the PMF's Supervisor and the PMF during initial agency orientation
- Provide assistance in understanding the PMF Program and agency requirements and guidelines
- Help fellows and supervisors identify and clarify opportunities, responsibilities, and commitments

In addition, PMF Coordinators are available to meet with agency PMF Supervisors to:

- Discuss the PMF Program guidelines in 5 CFR, 362
- Discuss Coordinator's and Supervisors roles
- Discuss development of position descriptions
- Discuss development of IDP's
- Assist in developing an orientation for the PMF
- Provide other information as necessary

Agency PMF Coordinators may also attend periodic meetings sponsored by OPM.

Your agency's PMF Coordinator is \_\_\_\_\_, and can be reached by calling \_\_\_\_\_.

## **AGENCY PMF SUPERVISORS**

PMF Supervisors provide important instruction, guidance, and feedback to the fellow. The success of a fellow and of the PMF Program is due in large measure to the kind of interaction a PMF has with his or her supervisor. PMF Supervisors are encouraged to meet with the agency PMF Coordinator to discuss and clarify their role. Such conversations could include these topics:

- Developing of position descriptions and IDP's
- Providing an orientation for the PMF to include:
  - Organizational structure
  - Working hours, lunch and other breaks
  - Paydays and Time and Attendance Sheets

- Technology, supplies, equipment
- Office procedures, protocol, and rules
- Introductions to staff
- Explaining duties, responsibilities, expectations
- Providing regular feedback and guidance
- Conducting performance appraisals
- Accessing information about career entry positions upon completion of the program

### **Mentors**

Mentors provide invaluable resource information, assist fellows to work effectively within the agency and the Federal government, and are an invaluable part of a fellow's career development. The mentoring relationship is a major contributor to the development of a valuable agency employee and future Federal manager. Fellows and agencies are encouraged to develop and support mentoring relationships early in the program. A USDA mentor and protege handbook is available on the Internet at <http://www.usda.gov/da/employ/MentorProtegeHandbook.pdf>.

### **Program References**

Written materials are available from your agency PMF Coordinator or on the Internet. Materials may include:

- [Executive Order 13318 on November 21, 2003](#)
- [Presidential Management Fellows Program Guide for Agencies](#)
- Sample IDP's
- [5 CFR, 362, Presidential Management Fellows Program](#)
- PMF Brochures





## **United States Department of Agriculture**

### **OFFICE OF HUMAN CAPITAL MANAGEMENT PRESIDENTIAL MANAGEMENT FELLOWS PROGRAM GUIDE JULY 2008**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.