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Policies and Procedures

Title: Selection, Appointment, and Responsibilities of the Authorized Departmental Officer's Designated Representative (ADODR)

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This P&P prescribes ARS policy with regard to the selection, appointment, and responsibilities of ADODRs in the performance of extramural agreements.

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1. Background

ARS has statutory authority to enter into a number of different types of extramural agreements. With these statutory authorities comes the delegated authority for Authorized Departmental Officers (ADO) to sign these agreements on behalf of the Administrator, ARS.

The titles “ADO” and “Authorized Departmental Officer’s Designated Representative” (ADODR) are basically synonymous with the more commonly known titles “Contracting Officer” (CO) and “Contracting Officer’s Technical Representative” (COTR) which are terms used in the procurement arena. The titles ADO and ADODR were developed in USDA a number of years ago to differentiate between agreements involving grants and cooperative agreements from procurement type actions normally handled under procurement procedures. The ADODR is an integral part of the extramural agreements program and is responsible to the ADO for directing technical performance, providing oversight of the project, and assuring fiscal accountability for all extramural agreements to which they have been delegated ADODR authority.

2. Abbreviations and Definitions

AD	Area Director
ADO	Authorized Departmental Officer
ADODR	Authorized Departmental Officer’s Designated Representatives
AFM	Administrative and Financial Management
AIMS	Agreement Information Management System
ARIS	Agricultural Research Information System
ARS	Agricultural Research Service
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CRIS	Current Research Information System

EAD	Extramural Agreements Division
HQ	ARS Headquarters
LAO/T	Location Administrative Officer/Technician
MAEA	Mission Area Ethics Advisor
OTT	Office of Technology Transfer
PI	Principle Investigator
REE	Research, Education, and Economics (Mission Area within USDA)
RL	Research Leader
U.S.C.	United States Code
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture

Administrator - The Administrator of ARS.

Agency - The Agricultural Research Service.

Authorized Departmental Officer - The Agency's Official delegated authority to negotiate, award, administer, and terminate extramural agreements. **The ADO is the only person that can obligate funds or commit the resources of the Agency with regard to extramural agreements.**

Authorized Departmental Officers Designated Representative - The Agency's technical representative, acting on behalf of the ADO. **The ADODR has no authority to obligate funds or commit the resources of the Agency.**

Cooperator - Any State cooperative institution, State department of agriculture, college, university, other research or educational institution or organization, Federal or private agency or organization, individual, or any other party identified by ARS to participate in extramural projects.

Extramural Agreement - Any grant, cooperative agreement, funded or unfunded (including incoming grants or cooperative agreements), or memoranda of understanding entered into by ARS and any other organization.

Headquarters Unit Leader – An ARS Deputy Administrator, Assistant Administrator, and/or a Director of an ARS Headquarters Staff Office.

i-Edison – An electronic database used by external partners to report inventions funded by Federal agencies.

3. Authorities

7 U.S.C. 3318c; 7 U.S.C. 3318(b); 7 U.S.C. 3319a.

4. Other Applicable Statutes, Regulations, Policies and Procedures

18 U.S.C. 201-209; 5 CFR part 2635; 7 CFR part 2.15; 7 CFR part 2.21; 7 CFR part 2.65; Dept. Reg. 5200-3; REE P&P 700.0; and ARS P&P 129.0.

5. Delegation of Authority

The authority to commit the resources of the Agency on behalf of the Administrator, known as Delegation of Authority, flows from the Secretary of Agriculture through the Under Secretary for Research, Education, and Economics (REE) to the Administrator, ARS (Administrator). ARS personnel acting under a Delegation of Authority are known as ADOs. When an ADO further delegates authority to other personnel to provide technical oversight of extramural projects, those employees are referred to as ADODRs. Employees acting under a Delegation of Authority are acting as an agent of the Administrator. Delegating the signature authority of the Administrator accomplishes numerous program objectives and efficiencies. Aside from relieving the Administrator of the burden of personally signing individual agreements, the Delegation of Authority allows for closer monitoring and administration of extramural agreements by ARS personnel. **NOTE: ADODR's are not authorized to sign extramural agreements on behalf of ARS.**

6. Policy

- ADODR appointments shall be limited to ARS employees whose position category codes are designated as Category 1, Research Scientist; Category 4, Service Scientist; or Category 6, Specialist. (Refer to Exhibit 2 for definitions of ARS Position Category Codes). ARS employees who hold a temporary appointment are ineligible to serve as an ADODR.
- The ADODR must have a written delegation of authority from the ADO to act as the technical representative for ARS in the extramural project. The ADODR represents the ADO in the management and technical oversight of extramural agreements. (Exhibit 1)
- The ADODR shall not delegate any responsibility or duty as the ADO's representative to any other person. If it is necessary for another ARS employee to assume the duties and responsibilities of the appointed ADODR, the current ADODR shall advise the ADO who will appoint a new ADODR.
- The MAEA will ensure that all conflict of interest and impartiality concerns are addressed upon review of the ADODRs financial disclosure report and conflict of interest certification.

- The ADODR must submit the Confidential Financial Disclosure Report, OGE-450, to the MAEA within 30 days of appointment unless the ADODR had previously filed an OGE-450 for the current fiscal year. Form REE-102, Conflict of Interest Certification, may be required for each ADODR appointment. (Contact the MAEA for additional guidance.)
- The ARS ADODR Training Program must be completed in advance of receiving a delegation of authority from the ADO, and annually thereafter.
- The ADODR must complete annual ethics training requirements as specified by the MAEA.
- The authorities delegated to the ADODR can be suspended or revoked at any time for a variety of reasons. (See Part 11 of this P&P).

a. **Selection and Appointment of the ADODR:**

1) Selection of the ADODR

The RL or HQ Unit leader is responsible for determining the appropriate ARS employee (position category 1, 4 or 6) to serve as the ADODR. Generally, the ARS employee who identifies the need to initiate an extramural agreement will be selected and approved by the RL or HQ Unit Leader to serve as the ADODR.

2) Appointment of the ADODR

Following selection of the ADODR by program management, the ADO officially appoints the ADODR. The ADO ensures eligibility of the proposed ADODR by verifying the position category, completion of ADODR training, and ensuring that the proposed ADODR is not currently under suspension or revocation action. In accordance with this P&P, the ADO issues written notification appointing the employee as ADODR for the project or program. (Exhibit 1).

7. ADODR Responsibilities

Program stewardship, oversight and accountability for extramural projects or programs provide the foundation for the ADODRs responsibilities. ADODRs are responsible for ensuring effective and efficient management of public funds obligated to support the ARS Extramural Agreements Program. The ADO, acting as an agent of the Administrator, must ensure that ARS extramural agreements are executed consistent with laws, regulations, and Agency policies. The ADODR in his/her role as the Agency's technical expert for the extramural *and* in-house performance of the project or program must be fully cognizant of the status of the project during the life of the agreement.

Oversight responsibilities require ADODRs to be actively involved with the Cooperator in directing and monitoring the performance of the extramural research project to ensure that agreements are truly cooperative in nature; mission relevant; properly budgeted; appropriately monitored, administered, and completed in accordance with the terms and conditions of the agreement. In addition, ADODRs are accountable for in-house performance of research objectives and proper use of financial and other Agency resources, in accordance with the terms and conditions of the agreement.

The ADODR is directly accountable to and represents the ADO in managing the technical aspects of the extramural agreement throughout the agreement cycle. The agreement cycle consists of three stages: 1) Pre-award; 2) Post-award Administration; and, 3) Closeout. Following are specific responsibilities delegated to the ADODR for each of these stages of the agreement cycle.

a. Pre-Award

The ADODR is delegated authority to:

- Discuss proposed projects with and obtain permission from line management regarding project objectives, approach, costs, scientific merit, and mission relevance.
- Conduct preliminary discussions/negotiations with the Cooperator which includes:
 - Identifying project goals and objectives.
 - Discussing funding arrangements, i.e., developing budgets that accurately reflect the amount to be reimbursed by ARS, ARS's in-house performance costs, and the Cooperators contribution to the project. (As may be required.)
 - Defining the period of performance.
 - Identifying the potential for inventions and advising the ADO appropriately.
 - Defining requirements for interim and final performance and financial status reports.
- Ensure line management approval of all extramural agreement documents, i.e., ARS-425, Authorization to Apply For and Use Funds From Outside Sources; AD-416, Research Resume; AD-417, Classification of Research; Form-550a, Plan and Authorization to Fund Extramural Research; Cooperator contact information; Statement of Work (SOW); and Budget as applicable to each agreement type.
- Develop SOW or proposals that accurately reflect the proposed work plan, ensuring the proposed project is consistent with the goals and objectives of the "in-house" project or "D" project.

- Develop budgets that are consistent with the performance requirements identified in the extramural agreement. The budget must accurately reflect the entire cost of the project, i.e., total amount to be reimbursed to the Cooperator (direct and indirect costs, as applicable); total in-house cost to ARS (direct and indirect costs); and, total in-house cost to the Cooperator (direct and indirect costs as applicable).

Note: The ADODR must guard against making commitments to the Cooperator that could result in the ADODR becoming personally liable for any expenditures incurred by the Cooperator that were not authorized by the ADO.

b. Post-Award Administration

The ADODR is delegated authority to:

- Monitor the Cooperator's performance on each extramural agreement to ensure that the project is progressing in accordance with the objectives of the agreement.
- Methods of monitoring may include, discussing project plans, reviewing program goals and accomplishments with the Cooperator's PI at ARS facilities; stakeholders meetings (off-site meetings); by teleconference, e-mail or other types of written correspondence; validating the adequacy of financial control systems (where deemed necessary by the ADO); and/or, providing technical advice to Cooperator's personnel. The ADODR may also conduct site visits at Cooperator's facilities as determined by regulations applicable to the extramural agreement, or if the ADODR determines the Cooperator is not in compliance with the terms and conditions of the extramural agreement.

Note: Cooperators are responsible for monitoring the day-to-day operations of ARS extramural agreements using their established financial controls and policies, as long as they are consistent with ARS requirements. It is the responsibility of the Cooperator to ensure that the project is being performed in compliance with the terms and conditions of the award.

- The ADODR shall document monitoring activities, in addition to recording the Cooperator's progress report on an annual basis, in ARIS via the AD-421, Progress Report.
- Ensure that payments made to the Cooperator are justified by demonstrable performance accomplishments, and that the Agency receives project deliverables in accordance with the terms and conditions of the agreement.

- Notify the ADO promptly of any modifications necessary to assure successful completion of the project, i.e., budget modifications, extensions of time, funding increases, change in PI, etc.
- Obtain and review interim and final financial status reports from the Cooperator as specified in the terms and conditions of the agreement.
- Provide approved financial status reports to the ADO for inclusion in the official agreement file.
- Ensure patent invention reports and requests to publish (ARS-115) are entered in to the ARIS License and Invention and Research Doc. Modules, respectively. Refer to ARS/OTT and NPS for further guidance.
- Ensure Cooperator reports invention disclosures via i-Edison at www.iEdison.gov
- Approve or disapprove all requests for payment and reimbursements, and forward them to the ADO for appropriate action assuring that all expenditures are accounted for as budgeted in the agreement.
- Report any failure of the Cooperator to meet the objectives of the agreement or failure to submit required reports as specified in the terms and conditions of the agreement to the RL, or HQ Unit Leader, and the ADO.
- Maintain a complete file for each agreement. Typically, a complete file consists of copies of the fully executed agreement, including all amendments, as appropriate; copies of all ARIS documents; correspondence including enclosures; copies of interim and final performance, financial and/or invention reports and site visit reports, as appropriate for each type of agreement; copies of all payment documents. (Original documents received from the Cooperator are to be sent to the ADO).

c. Closeout

Responsibility for promptly closing extramural agreements rests primarily with the ADO. The Cooperator, in compliance with the terms and conditions of the agreement, is responsible for submitting all project reports and or deliverables to the ADODR within 90 days of project completion or termination. To facilitate official closeout of an agreement, the ADODR is responsible to the ADO for:

- Obtaining final performance and financial status reports from the Cooperator and forwarding approved reports to the ADO.
- Obtaining final payment requests as applicable, and forwarding approved requests to the ADO for payment processing.

- Ensuring patent invention reports and requests to publish (ARS-115) are entered in to the ARIS License and Invention and Research Doc. Modules, respectively. Refer to ARS/OTT and NPS for further guidance.
- Verifying Cooperators invention disclosures are reported via i-Edison.
- Preparing and forwarding equipment and property disposition reports to the ADO.
- Notifying Location and Area personnel that agreement is complete and all reports have been received and forwarded to the ADO.

8. Ethics Guidance for ADODRs

The ADODR, through decision or the exercise of personal judgment in the administration of an extramural agreement, has the ability to affect the financial interests of the Cooperator. Consequently, the ADODR is prohibited by law and regulation from taking official actions that affect the Cooperator where he or she possesses a personal financial interest in, or a “covered relationship” with the Cooperator.

Specifically, status as a Federal employee restricts the ADODR’s ability to enter into employment with, provide personal professional services to, act on behalf of, and receive gifts and benefits from the Cooperator.

Where an ADODR’s participation in a matter involving specific parties would not violate Federal bribery and conflict of interest statutes (18 U.S.C. § 201-209) or the Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch (5 CFR Part 2635), but would raise a question in the mind of a reasonable person about their impartiality, the MAEA may authorize the employee to participate in the matter based on a determination made in light of all relevant circumstances.

Violations of Criminal Ethics laws are reported to the Office of Inspector General, and violations of the Standards of Ethical Conduct may result in disciplinary action. **Employees are strongly encouraged to seek guidance from the Area Ethics Advisor or MAEA prior to engaging in activities with a potential Cooperator.**

9. Prohibitions

The ADODR is prohibited from engaging in the following actions:

- Performing any activity for which the Cooperator compensates the ADODR in return for services.

- Serving as a tenured professor with a University Cooperator (with or without pay).
- Serving as a non-tenured professor subject to a University Cooperator’s control and appraisal (with or without pay).
- Serving in a managerial/fiduciary or employment role – officer, director, trustee, general partner or employee with the Cooperator (e.g., President of Professional or Scientific Society, or member of the University Tenure Committee).
- Seeking employment with the Cooperator. (Contact the Area Ethics Advisor or MAEA for further guidance).
- Entering into an extramural agreement with a former employer. A one-year waiting period is required. The proposed ADODR must receive a waiver or exception to this prohibition prior to participating on the extramural agreement. (Contact the Area Ethics Advisor or MAEA for further guidance).
- Participating on an extramural agreement with a Cooperator who employs a relative, i.e. spouse, children, parent, close relative, household member, or general partner **unless approved by the MAEA.**
- Engaging in professional activities that establish a financial interest or covered relationship with the Cooperator.
- Teaching courses or conducting training in a personal capacity for a University Cooperator subject to University appraisal and control (official guest lectures approved by the Agency do not create any ethics concerns because the ADODR is performing an “Official Duty”). (Contact the Area Ethics Advisor or MAEA for further guidance).
- Engaging in matters solely internal to the administration of the Cooperator. For example:
 - Administering Cooperator funds
 - Participating in University Tenure or Student Search committees
 - Chairing a Graduate Student Dissertation Committee
 - Participating on the Faculty senate
 - Participating on Cooperator budget and/or finance committees
- Serving in a personal capacity with the Cooperator (e.g. service as an official, committee, or subcommittee chairperson, spokesperson, fundraiser, attorney, agent, contractor, or directing the activities of the organization, or devoting significant time to promoting specific programs of the organization). *Note: Simple membership, payment of dues, the donation of financial support, attending conferences, and contributing to the Cooperator’s publications would not, by themselves, constitute active participation.*
- Representing oneself as an employee of the Cooperator.

- Assisting in litigation on behalf of the Cooperator (subpoena requests must be reviewed by the MAEA).
- Applying for grants or signing a grant application as Principle Investigator on behalf of the Cooperator.
- Assisting or participating in a grant application in which he or she has a personal financial interest other than through Federal employment (e.g., patent, rights or licenses, and royalties paid through the Federal Technology Transfer Act), or a “covered relationship”.
- Making decisions concerning Cooperator assets or personnel to be utilized in carrying out the research underlying the grant.
- Soliciting or accepting Gifts or Benefits from the Cooperator (contact the Area Ethics Advisor or MAEA for further guidance).
- Signing an extramural agreement or otherwise obligating funds or ARS resources for the performance of extramural projects.
- Negotiating indirect cost rates, intellectual property provisions or liability/indemnification clauses (Refer to your servicing ADO).
- Starting work on any project, or authorizing the Cooperator to start work on a project, prior to being notified that a fully executed agreement has been signed and accepted by the ADO.
- Engaging in the employee/employer relationship of the cooperating organization, including making recommendations on hiring, conducting performance evaluations of Cooperator personnel, approving leave, providing bonus awards, etc. These types of administrative supervision must remain the sole responsibility of the Cooperator.
- Using an extramural agreement for the principle purpose of circumventing the Federal hiring process.
- Using an extramural agreement to “bank” funding which could not otherwise be legally obligated or are not directly supportive of an established bona fide need.
- Using an extramural agreement to fund construction projects.
- Using an extramural agreement (funded or non-funded) for the principle purpose of acquiring, modifying, or improving real property. (Refer to your servicing Real Property Specialist for further guidance.)
- Using an extramural agreement to acquire resources for the direct support of ARS employees.

- Using ARS funds *provided* to a Cooperator via an extramural agreement to pay for ARS employees' travel expenses. Note: ARS employees may accept funding for travel from non-federal sources. Refer to REE P&P 341.2, Acceptance of Travel Funds from Non-Federal Sources for details.
- Using ARS funds *provided* to a Cooperator via an extramural agreement to purchase equipment intended solely for ARS ownership.

10. Research Misconduct

ARS and research institutions that conduct ARS-funded research projects are partners who share responsibility for the research process. ARS has ultimate oversight authority for ARS funded research, but research institutions bear primary responsibility for prevention and detection of research misconduct and for the inquiry, investigation, and adjudication of research misconduct alleged to have occurred in association with their institution.

Research misconduct is defined as fabrication, falsification, or plagiarism in proposing, performing, or reviewing research, or in reporting research results or other practices that significantly deviate from those that are commonly accepted within the research community.

- *Fabrication* – making up results and recording or reporting them.
- *Falsification* – manipulating research materials, equipment, or processes, or changing or omitting data or results such that the research is not accurately represented in the research record.
- *Plagiarism* – the appropriation of another person's ideas, processes, results, or words without giving appropriate credit, including those obtained through confidential review of others' research proposals or manuscripts.

ADODRs who receive or learn of an allegation of research misconduct should immediately report the allegation to the appropriate Area Committee on Ethics in Science (CEIS) representative. (Refer to ARS P&P 129.0, Research Misconduct)

11. Suspension/Revocation of ADODR Authority

An ARS employee within line management of the ADODR, including the ADO, can initiate a suspension or revocation action against the ADODR. Some of the grounds for which suspension and/or revocation actions may be initiated include (but are not limited to):

- Failure to follow established agency policies and procedures
- Exceeding delegated authority
- Misuse of delegated authority

- Violating Federal Ethics laws and regulations
- Misappropriation of funds
- Research misconduct
- Misrepresentation of research results
- Criminal acts related to extramural agreement activity
- Convictions in a criminal or civil court that seriously and directly affect the business integrity or business honesty of an employee

Suspension is the first step in initiating any revocation action regarding a delegation of authority under these provisions. Suspension is not a permanent action. It is used by ARS officials to: 1) investigate grounds for permanent revocation of authority; and/or 2) hold in abeyance the delegated authority of an individual until any temporary situations causing suspension may be remedied.

Any ARS official initiating such a suspension or revocation action will immediately communicate the circumstances or grounds for the suspension, in writing, to the Director, EAD. A dated copy of that communication will also be sent to the individual for whom suspension is being recommended. The individual will be provided ten (10) working days (from the date of the letter initiating the action) to submit a written rebuttal of the circumstances surrounding the proposed suspension.

After receiving correspondence from both parties, the Director, EAD will respond in writing within ten (10) working days with directions to uphold or deny the proposed suspension or revocation of delegated authorities of the ADODR in question.

a. **Suspension:**

1) Suspension – Temporary

ADODRs placed under temporary suspension shall be made aware that the suspension is temporary in nature and will also be advised as to what actions are necessary to reinstate their delegation of authority. The ADODRs suspension of authority can be imposed for any length of time deemed necessary to remedy the cause for suspension.

2) Suspension - Proposed Revocation

During the period of suspension the ADODR will no longer have authority to perform any of the duties delegated to him/her under their original delegation of authority. Suspensions leading to revocation are for serious violations or willful misconduct. The ADODR's suspension of delegated authority can be put in place for any length of time deemed necessary to investigate the reasons for the proposed revocation. The length of time for which the authority has been suspended shall be communicated to the individual in writing and may be extended, for purposes of investigation, for any additional period of time deemed necessary. The ADODR under suspension will be: 1) notified in writing of any extensions of the period of suspension; 2) notified in writing that the suspension may lead to permanent revocation of delegated authority; and, 3) granted an opportunity to submit a rebuttal to the circumstances of the proposed revocation if no rebuttal had been previously submitted under prior suspension procedures.

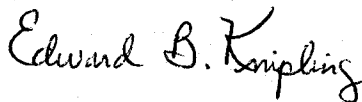
b. Revocation

Revocation is a final action taken by the Agency to permanently remove the ADODR's delegation of authority. No revocation is to be considered final without the concurrence of the Area Director or the Administrator.

To revoke the delegation of authority of an ADODR, the Director, EAD will notify the employee in writing of the revocation. The letter will include, at a minimum, the reason for the revocation and the effective date of the revocation.

c. Other Legal Remedies for Misconduct

The revocation procedures referenced in this P&P are limited only to the delegation of authority granted by the ADO under these provisions. It does not supersede other Federal governmental or institutional policies or procedures for addressing the same issue of misconduct or other forms and instances of misconduct. Additionally, it does not supersede criminal or other civil law applicable to instances of misconduct. ARS may address these other issues as authorized by statutes, regulations or ARS policies and procedures.



EDWARD B. KNIPLING
Administrator

Attachments:

Exhibit 1, Letter of Appointment to the ADODR
Exhibit 2, Position Category Codes

EXHIBIT 1

SUBJECT: Appointment of Authorized Departmental Officer's Designated Representative
(ADODR)

TO: (Name of ADODR)

FROM: (Name of ADO)
Authorized Departmental Officer

In accordance with REE Policy and Procedure 701.0, you are hereby delegated authority to represent ARS as the Authorized Departmental Officer's Designated Representative for (type of agreement, i.e., Specific Cooperative Agreement, Grant, etc.) No. (enter agreement no.).

cc:
LAO/T
File

Position Category Codes

An ARS system of administrative designations for groups of positions having generally similar characteristics, primarily for personnel and budgetary tracking purposes. Category has no legal or administrative significance outside of ARS. Some positions may perform duties from more than one category. ARS categories established for all positions are as follows:

- **Category 1 (Research Scientist).** Permanent positions in which the highest level of work, for a major portion of time, involves personal conduct or conduct and leadership of theoretical and experimental investigations primarily of a basic or applied nature such as: determining the nature, magnitude, and interrelationships of physical, biological, and psychological phenomena and processes; creating or developing principles, criteria, methods, and a body of knowledge generally applicable for use by others. Such positions meet all or most of the criteria enumerated in the RGEG. Category 1 positions are SY positions.
- **Category 2 (Nonpermanent Research/Service Scientist).** Professional scientific positions which are established on a nonpermanent basis, are filled through temporary or term appointments, and entail research and/or service science work. Examples are Research Associate, Research Affiliate, Visiting Scientist, and individuals reemployed in ARS after having retired from Category 1 or Category 4 positions. (*Except those appointed as Collaborators -- see Code 0.*)
- **Category 3 (Support Scientist).** Professional scientist positions which function to provide direct support or service to one or more Category 1 or 4 positions. The work of such positions is characterized by responsible involvement in one or more, but not all, phases of research (particularly not the problem selection and definition phases); responsible participation in analysis and preliminary interpretation of data (but not including responsibility for final interpretation and conclusion which relate the results to the field of research involved). Examples include but are not limited to: (1) conducting literature searches; (2) selecting procedures and conducting experiments; (3) collecting and analyzing data or specimens; or (4) preparing technical reports.
- **Category 4 (Service Scientist).** Permanent positions whose incumbents either primarily or exclusively serve as project or program leaders over or personally perform, work assigned to ARS involving professional scientific services to the public or other governmental agencies, such as: identification of animals, plants, or insects; diagnosis of diseases; mass production of plants, animals, or insects, collection, introduction, and maintenance of germplasm or specimens; vaccine production; education, extension, or technology transfer activities; or nutrient data and food intake surveys. Category 4 positions are SY positions.

- **Category 5 (Technician/Aid/Assistant (Non-engineering and Non-scientific)).** Includes all technicians, aids, and assistants in non-engineering and non-scientific single-interval occupational series (except those within the GS-0300 Group). Examples include: Safety Technician, Personnel Assistant, Accounting Technician, Purchasing Agent, Procurement Assistant, Library Technician, Supply Clerk, Personnel Clerk, Photographer, Guard, and Firefighter.
- **Category 6 (Specialist).** “Specialist” positions which perform scientific program management, administration and/or analytical duties and therefore require professional education and training. Examples are: Area Director, Center Director, Agricultural Administrator, National Program Leader, Human Resources Specialist, Information Technology Specialist, Administrative Officer, Budget Officer, and Librarian.
- **Category 7 (Technician/Aid/Assistant positions (Engineering and Scientific Support)).** Identify technician, aid, and assistant positions in one-grade interval series within the GS-400, 600, 700, 800, 300, and/or 1500 groups. Examples include: Biological Science Technician/Aid, Electronics Technician, Hydrologic Technician, Statistical Assistant/Clerk, Physical Science Technician.
- **Category 8 (Trade and Craft Occupations).** Positions having trade or craft knowledge as the paramount qualifications requirement. Examples: Boiler Plant Operator Foreman, Animal Caretaker Leader, Laborer, Farmer, Tractor Operator.
- **Category 9 (Administrative Support Occupations (Clerical/Secretarial/Other)).** General occupations involved in structured work in support of office operations within one-grade interval series in the GS-300 occupational group. Examples: Secretary, Office Automation Clerk/Assistant, Computer Operator, Administrative Technician/Clerk, Management Assistant/Clerk.
- **Category 0 (Zero).** Includes all positions that do not fit any of the above codes, including all positions encumbered by students. Examples: Student Trainees (STEP, SCEP); Expert and Consultant positions; Collaborators; and Volunteers.
- **Category G (Intergovernmental Personnel Act (IPA)).** Employees serving a temporary assignment between ARS and States, local governments, institutions of higher education, Indian Tribal governments, or other organizations under Title IV of the Intergovernmental Personnel Act of 1978 (PL 95-454).