

# Reclamation Manual

## Directives and Standards

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<b>Subject:</b>	Surplus Employee Placement Program
<b>Purpose:</b>	The benefits of this Directive and Standard are to provide updated procedures that apply to administering the Surplus Employee Placement Program.
<b>Authority:</b>	5 CFR 330.6; and the Department of the Interior Career Transition Assistance Plan, September 8, 1997.
<b>Approving Official:</b>	Director, Administration
<b>Contact:</b>	Human Resources Program Management Group, 84-25100

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1. **Program Objective.** The Surplus Employee Placement Program (Program) is established to ensure that Reclamation employees assigned to offices scheduled for closure or reduction-in-force (RIF) and who are interested in placement assistance are given the opportunity for continued employment with Reclamation in positions for which they are available and fully qualified.
2. **Definition and Program Eligibility.**
  - A. **Surplus Employee.** A surplus employee is a current Reclamation employee serving under an appointment in the competitive service, in tenure group 1 or 2, at grade levels GS-15 and below including Federal Wage System or Negotiated Pay equivalent, who has received a certificate of expected separation, RIF notice, or other notification indicating that the position is surplus (e.g., notice that the position is scheduled to be abolished). The surplus employee must be in good standing and have a “fully successful” or higher performance rating of record. This also includes employees who have declined a transfer of function and/or directed reassignments. Regional offices may establish their own region-wide requirements, consistent with the requirements in this Directive and Standard, for surplus employees under appointments in the excepted service.
  - B. **Surplus Employee Placement Eligibility.** Surplus employees shall be given a written notice of their eligibility to participate in the Program, and must confirm their interest in receiving assistance under this Program through completion of a registration form (see Appendix A).
3. **Responsibilities.**
  - A. **Human Resources Manager.** The Human Resources Manager is responsible for ensuring Reclamation-wide procedures are in place for administering the Program and are in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

# Reclamation Manual

## Directives and Standards

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- B. **Servicing Human Resources Officers.** Servicing Human Resources Officers will provide guidance and advice to management on the applicability and eligibility of the Program. They will also ensure that proper consideration is afforded to all eligible employees and approve justifications of non-selection.
  - C. **Selecting Officials.** Selecting Officials are responsible for ensuring that proper consideration is afforded to all interested and eligible employees.
4. **Procedures.** Servicing Human Resources Offices will work with management officials to establish procedures to identify on a timely basis the organizations or positions that will become surplus to the needs of an organization within their jurisdiction.
- A. **Employees at General Schedule (GS)-7 and Above (or Equivalent).** Employees at GS-7 and above and Federal Wage System employees at the GS-7 representative rate (GS-7 step 4, basic pay) and above will be entitled to Reclamation-wide placement assistance. Employees must designate their lowest acceptable grade, down to 1 grade level or interval lower than the grade currently held. In addition, employees may designate availability for different work schedules; however, priority consideration will be limited to the employees' current work schedule. Employees in this category will receive Reclamation-wide placement assistance only after Local Commuting Area (LCA) surplus employees are considered. Employees will be entered on the *Surplus Employee Placement Program List* (see Appendix B) no sooner than 6 months prior to their anticipated date of availability.
  - B. **Employees below GS-7 (or Equivalent).** Employees below GS-7 and Federal Wage System employees below the GS-7 representative rate (GS-7 step 4, basic pay), will be entitled to placement assistance within their LCA. Employees must designate their lowest acceptable grades, down to 1 grade level or interval lower than the grade currently held. Employees will be entered on the *Surplus Employee Placement Program List* (see Appendix B) no sooner than 6 months prior to their anticipated date of availability.
  - C. **Negotiated Pay.** Employees covered by the provisions of a negotiated labor management agreement will be entitled to region or Denver-wide placement assistance. Employees must volunteer if they want to be listed on the Reclamation-wide listing.
  - D. **Restrictions in Filling Vacancies.**
    - (1) No vacancy in the LCA will be filled by promotion of a Reclamation employee or by recruitment from outside of Reclamation if there is a qualified surplus employee willing to accept placement in the position. In addition, surplus candidates willing to accept positions outside of the LCA will be given the same consideration as above if there are no "well-qualified" Special Selection Priority (SSP) candidates within the LCA.

# Reclamation Manual

## Directives and Standards

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- (2) Note: Staffing and classification actions noted in the Department of the Interior Career Transition Assistance Plan (CTAP), Section C, Part 6, are not subject to surplus programs (i.e., conversion of Veterans Readjustment Appointment or Student Career Experience Program to the competitive service).
- E. **Approval of Non-Selection.** Requests for non-selection of a surplus employee will be submitted to the servicing Human Resources Officer for approval. These requests must identify the reasons the surplus employee does not meet the qualification requirements of the position or other information as appropriate.
- F. **Grade and Pay Retention.** A GS or Federal Wage System employee who accepts a position at a grade lower (or lower rate of basic pay) will be entitled to grade and pay retention. Surplus employees will be informed of their entitlement at the time they receive offers to position vacancies. Provisions for a Highest Previous Rate (HPR) must comply with 5 CFR 531. HPR may be applied in assignments of surplus employees between Federal Wage System and GS positions.
- G. **Placement Offers.** Placement offers to surplus employees will be in writing, and a copy sent to the employee's servicing Human Resources Office. The surplus employee must accept or decline the offer within the time specified in the written offer. Failure to respond will be considered a declination of the position. Declination of any offer within the surplus employee's stated availability will affect further priority consideration. Payment of relocation expenses will be guaranteed; however, the terms will be negotiated between the losing and gaining organization prior to making a written offer.
- H. **Loss of Entitlement.**
- (1) Placement assistance under this Program will be discontinued when the employee is placed in a continuing position, separates from Reclamation, declines a permanent or continuing position (including failing to respond to an offer), or upon effective date of RIF. Loss of entitlement does not pertain to declination of offers of temporary employment, or the offer of a position which does not meet the employee's stated availability.
- (2) Note: Failure to accept a placement offer under this Program will not affect the surplus employee's other entitlements (e.g., grade and pay retention under RIF, priority placement under the Reemployment Priority List (RPL), or employment assistance under the CTAP).

# Reclamation Manual

## Directives and Standards

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### 5. Order of Consideration and Selection.

- A. **Vacancies Within the LCA.** The order of selection of surplus employees under this Program will be consistent with the order of selection for filling vacancies within Reclamation to ensure consistency with the CTAP as set forth by 5 CFR 330 Part F and the Department CTAP (5 CFR 330.605 and 5 CFR 330.606 (d)).
- B. **Vacancies Outside the LCA.** Reclamation surplus Program employees at GS-7 and above or Federal Wage System employees at the GS-7 representative rate (GS-7, step 4, basic pay) or at journey level and above will receive selection priority for positions in areas outside the LCA of their position of record only after other eligible surplus and displaced Department employees from within the LCA of the vacancy have been considered [5 CFR 330.606(b) and Department CTAP].

- 6. **Application Procedures.** Surplus Program employees are required to submit a current application or resume (e.g., OF-612 or personal resume). The application or resume must include sufficient information to evaluate the qualifications of the employee for the title, series, and grade levels for which registration is made. These forms are maintained by the servicing Human Resources Office. Please see Appendix B, *Surplus Employee Placement Program List*, for the recommended format for providing the required information to notify all servicing Human Resources Offices.