



**U.S. Department of Justice**


Civil Rights Division

*Assistant Attorney General  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW - RFK  
Washington, DC 20530*

December 3, 2009

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Civil Rights Division Employees

FROM: Thomas E. Perez   
Assistant Attorney General

SUBJECT: Civil Rights Division Experienced Attorney Hiring Process

The following process is used to hire experienced attorneys for career positions in the Civil Rights Division:

1. **ADVERTISING VACANCIES:**

Vacancy announcements for all experienced attorney vacancies will be posted on the Division's intranet ([http://mycrt/human\\_resources/employment/vacancies.php](http://mycrt/human_resources/employment/vacancies.php)), the Department of Justice's intranet and internet (<http://10.173.2.12/oarm/attvacancies.php> and <http://www.justice.gov/oarm/attvacancies.html>), and the Office of Personnel Management's website (<http://www.usajobs.com/>).

Announcements are also distributed by the Office of Attorney Recruitment and Management (OARM) and/or by the Division's Human Resources Office (HR) to a broad and diverse array of organizations, including but not limited to bar associations, law schools and professional organizations. Sections may also distribute announcements to additional organizations who may know of qualified candidates for a particular vacancy announcement.

Announcements for experienced attorney positions will be open for a minimum of three (3) weeks with specific opening and closing dates, list the minimum qualifications and, in some cases, the preferred qualifications for the position.

The Division does not accept unsolicited resumes or applications (i.e., those not in response to a particular vacancy announcement) for experienced attorney positions.

2. **APPLICATION PROCESS:**

Applicants must submit a resume, cover letter highlighting experience relevant to the qualifications identified in the vacancy announcement, and any other information requested in the vacancy announcement. Specific instructions regarding how to submit application materials will be set forth in the vacancy announcement.

3. **INTERVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS:**

To ensure a fair, transparent and merit based hiring process, each Section Chief will establish a Hiring Committee (the Committee) within his/her Section for each vacancy announcement. The Section Chief will serve on the Committee and select the other Committee members from a diverse cross section of the attorneys in the Section. The Committee will consist of at least three members, including the Section Chief and at least one non-manager attorney in the Section. All Committee members must receive training, including any Department mandated training, on merit system principles, prohibited personnel practices, and hiring and interviewing policies, and must certify that they will comply with those principles, prohibitions and policies.

The Committee, or a subset of the Committee, will review the applications relative to the qualifications set forth in the vacancy announcement and the Section Chief, with input from the Committee, and will determine which applicants will be interviewed.

Applicants selected for interviews will be interviewed by the full Committee or a subset of the Committee consisting of no fewer than three attorneys. To the extent practicable, a common group of Committee members should interview all of the applicants selected for interview for a particular vacancy. If the Section Chief does not participate in the initial interview, he/she may conduct subsequent interview(s) with the applicant(s) recommended by the Committee following the initial interviews. At the conclusion of the interviews, the Committee will meet to discuss the applicants.

The Section Chief will submit his/her hiring recommendation(s), with input from the other members of the Committee, to the Assistant Attorney General (AAG) or the AAG's designee for review and approval. Hiring recommendations by the Section Chief must be in writing and include the number of applicants for the position, the number and names of applicants interviewed, the resume of the recommended applicant(s), and a summary of how the recommended applicant's or applicants' education, work experience and references satisfy the qualifications for the position set forth in the vacancy announcement, and why the recommended applicant or applicants are best suited for the position among the other well qualified applicants. Section Chiefs are encouraged to recommend more than one applicant for each attorney vacancy.

A decision by the AAG or his/her designee to not accept the Section Chief's recommended applicant(s) must be made in writing.

4. **OFFERS OF EMPLOYMENT:**

All offers of employment must be made within the time frames set by OARM and/or the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), and are conditional and subject to the conditions set forth in the vacancy announcement, including successful completion of a background investigation, security clearance (if applicable) and drug testing, as well as to checks of references and/or current and prior employers.

5. **STARTING SALARIES:**

The starting salary for an experienced attorney is based on a number of factors, including the attorney's substantive legal experience and skills, and whether the attorney is currently employed outside the federal government, employed by the federal government, or unemployed.

Additional salary information may be found on OARM's website at

<http://www.justice.gov/oarm/arm/hp/hpsalary.htm>.

6. **NON-DISCRIMINATION & VETERANS' PREFERENCE:**

The Civil Rights Division is an equal opportunity / reasonable accommodation employer. All hiring is based on merit; consistent with applicable federal law and Department of Justice policies, discrimination based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, political affiliation (including using ideological affiliation as a proxy for determining political affiliation), religion, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, status as a parent, membership or non membership in an employee organization, or personal favoritism is strictly prohibited.

Complaints about discrimination and/or prohibited personnel practices may be raised within the Division by contacting the Division's Human Resources Officer (currently Linda Johnson at 202-514-4224), or the Division's employment counsel (currently Diana Embrey at 202-353-2510), or outside the Division by contacting the Department's Equal Employment Opportunity Staff at 202-616-4800, or the Office of Special Counsel at <http://www.osc.gov/> or 800-872-9885.

There is no formal rating system for applying veterans' preference to attorney appointments in the excepted service; however, DOJ considers veterans' preference eligibility as a positive factor in attorney hiring. In attorney vacancy announcements, applicants eligible for veterans' preference are encouraged to include that information in their cover letter or resume and attach supporting documentation (e.g., the DD 214 or other substantiating documents) to their submissions.

Revised December 2009. This policy statement applies to vacancy announcements closing after this statement's effective date and supersedes prior statements, if any, on the same topic.