

A WORD ABOUT ETHICS

SEEKING EMPLOYMENT OUTSIDE THE GOVERNMENT

Are there any restrictions on a Federal employee conducting a job search?

- No. An employee is free to look for a job at anytime with anyone.

Are there any restrictions on employees during a job search?

- Yes. Once a Federal employee starts to look for non-Federal employment, the employee must stop working on anything that will affect a prospective employer—meaning anyone who the employee contacted about a job or anyone who contacted the employee.

When does this disqualification requirement begin?

- Disqualification must begin as soon as:
 - the employee contacts the prospective employer about a possible job, such as by sending a résumé;
 - the prospective employer contacts the employee about a possible job; or
 - the employee learns from a headhunter or other agent about a contact with the prospective employer.

When does the disqualification requirement end?

- Disqualification ends when:
 - either the employee or the prospective employer notifies the other of a lack of interest in pursuing employment discussions or
 - two months have passed since the employee sent out a résumé or job application and has received no response.

Must an employee notify a supervisor or anyone else about a job search?

- Notice is usually not required but must be given:
 - to a supervisor if the disqualification requirement prevents an employee from working on an assigned task, or
 - to a supervisor or ethics official (in writing) if the employee receives a travel payment to attend a job interview from a prospective employer, or
 - to a supervisor and an ethics official if the employee is a procurement official for a contract of \$100,000 or more and has contacted or been contacted by a bidder on the contract (even if neither side pursues employment discussions).

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January 3, 2012