



Frequently Asked Questions for Veterans

1. **Question.** I am a veteran interested in pursuing Federal career opportunities. Are there any resources available that I can refer to for guidance and/or information?

Answer. Visit the Feds Hire Vets Website www.fedshirevets.gov a one-stop resource for Federal employment information for veterans.

2. **Question:** Where can I find a listing of available Federal jobs?

Answer. Most positions within the Federal government can be found on the USAJOBS website: www.usajobs.gov additionally, individual agency websites may list employment opportunities.

3. **Question:** Who do I contact if I have questions about a posted USAJOBS job opportunity announcement?

Answer. If you have questions about a particular USAJOBS job opportunity announcement, you will need to contact the Federal agency representative who posted the announcement. The point of contact information is generally listed at the bottom of the job opportunity announcement.

4. **Question.** I am interested in working for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA); where can I go for assistance?

Answer. You should contact a VA Regional Veterans Employment Coordinator (RVEC) on www.va.gov/vecs/. These VA representatives provide direct, hands-on assistance to Veterans seeking employment or visit VA for Vets website which facilitates the reintegration, retention and hiring of Veteran employees at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) at: <http://vaforvets.va.gov/Pages/default.aspx>.

5. **When applying for civil service positions in the Federal Executive Branch, am I considered a former Federal employee for having served in the armed forces?**

Answer. No.

6. **Question. Are there any Veteran representatives within Federal agencies that I can contact for job information within their organizations?**

Answer. Yes – Veteran Employment Program Officers (VEPO) are located at 24 Federal agencies in the Executive Branch of Government.

7. **Question. What is the Veterans Employment Program Office (VEPO)?**

Answer. The VEPO is responsible for promoting veterans' recruitment, employment, training and development, and retention within respective agencies. Veterans are encouraged to contact these individuals for specific information on employment opportunities in those agencies.

8. **Question. How can I find contact information for Federal agency Veteran Employment Program Offices (VEPO)?**

Answer. A complete listing of Federal agency VEPO's is located on the Feds Hire Vets website: <http://www.fedshirevets.gov/AgencyDirectory/index.aspx>.

9. **Question. Who determines eligibility for veterans' preference?**

Answer. Congress determines eligibility for veterans' preference through law in title 5, United States Code, Section 2108 (5 USC 2108). However, the Federal agency to which a veteran applies for employment will adjudicate claims for veterans' preference. The agency will request a copy of your DD-214, Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty, or other acceptable documentation in order to adjudicate claims for veterans' preference.

10. **Question. How do I claim veterans' preference?**

Answer. The vacancy announcement will indicate when veterans' preference is applicable and what documents to submit in order to claim preference. For more information veterans' preference, visit: <http://www.fedshirevets.gov/job/vetpref/index.aspx>.

11. **Question.** I am currently on active duty and will not get my DD 214 until I am separated or retired. Is there any other official documentation that I can submit with an application package in lieu of the DD 214 to verify my eligibility for veterans' preference or one of the special hiring authorities for veterans?

Answer. Yes, you can request a Statement of Service through your Military Personnel Office. The Statement of Service will need to list your dates of military service, character of service, and expected date of separation. If you have been awarded a service-connected disability rating from your branch of military service, include the disability rating in your Statement of Service.

12. **Question.** I served on Active Duty in the Armed Forces. Am I able to claim veterans' preference when applying for Federal jobs?

Answer. Maybe, not all veterans are considered veterans for the purpose of Federal civilian employment under Title 5 United States Code, Section 2108 and not all Active Duty service qualifies for veterans' preference. Veterans' preference is based on dates of active duty service, campaign badges, Purple Heart, or having a service connected-disability. Visit <http://www.fedshiresvets.gov/job/vetpref/index.aspx> for additional information on veterans' preference.

13. **Question.** I am a student veteran. How do I find out about student internships and employment offered within the Federal Government?

Answer. Please visit the USAJOBS website <http://www.usajobs.gov/studentjobs> for information. Additionally, individual agency websites may list student employment opportunities. Or, visit the following web links:

Find Internships:

<https://www.usajobs.gov/Search?Internship=Yes>

Find Recent Graduate Jobs:

<https://www.usajobs.gov/Search?RecentGrad=Yes>

14. Question. If I qualify for veterans benefits does that mean that I am eligible for veterans' preference?

Answer. Maybe, eligibility for veterans' preference in Federal employment is dependent on military service dates or service connected disability. The Feds Hire Vets website (www.fedshirevets.gov) provides guidance on veterans' preference and special hiring authorities for veterans.

15. Question. What determines whether I am eligible to claim 5-point or 10-point preference?

Answer: You are a 5 point preference eligible if your active duty service meets any of the following:

- 180 or more consecutive days, any part of which occurred during the period beginning September 11, 2001 and ending on a future date prescribed by Presidential proclamation or law as the last date of Operation Iraqi Freedom, OR
- Between August 2, 1990 and January 2, 1992, OR
- 180 or more consecutive days, any part of which occurred after January 31, 1955 and before October 15, 1976, OR
- In a war, campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge has been authorized or between April 28, 1952 and July 1, 1955.

Answer. You are a 10 point preference eligible if you served at any time, and you:

- have a service-connected disability, OR
- have received a Purple Heart.

If you are still unsure on your ability to claim veterans' preference eligibility, you may also visit the Department of Labor's Veterans' Preference Advisor at <http://www.dol.gov/elaws/vets/vetpref/mservice.htm>.

16. Question. I lost my DD-214 Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty, how can I obtain a copy?

Answer. A copy of the DD-214 and other military service records can be obtained from the National Archives. Visit <http://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/> for additional information.

17. Question. How do I apply to upgrade my military discharge?

Answer. The application for review of discharge and information on how to upgrade a military discharge can be found at: <http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/infomgt/forms/eforms/dd0293.pdf> .

18. Question. As a 10 point preference eligible is it true that I can submit a late application package after a closing date on a job posting?

Answer. As a 10-point eligible, you may file an application at any time for any position that was filled on a non-temporary basis in the preceding 3 years provided that a register (list) of eligibles is maintained that is closed to new applications; or if a register is about to be established. If you want to apply after the closing date of the vacancy announcement you should contact the local servicing personnel office; the contact information should be located at the bottom of the vacancy announcement.

19. Question. Is there a limit to the number of times I can use my veterans' preference when applying for Federal jobs?

Answer. No. There is no limit on how many times you can apply and claim an entitlement to veterans' preference. However, it is important to remember that veterans' preference does not apply when the agency is using merit promotion procedures to fill a position.

20. Question. What is the Standard Form (SF-15) application for 10-point Veterans' Preference?

Answer. The SF-15 is used by Federal agencies and OPM examining offices to adjudicate individuals' claims for veterans' preference in accordance with the Veterans' Preference Act of 1994. Veterans and certain family members who claim 10-point preference must fill out and submit the SF-15, to include supporting documentation when applying for Federal positions.

21. Question. Where can I find the Standard Form (SF)-15 to submit as part of my application package?

Answer. A fillable SF-15 can be found at:
http://www.opm.gov/Forms/pdf_fill/SF15.pdf.

22. Question. Where do I send the completed Standard Form (SF)-15?

Answer. The SF-15 and any other requested documentation should be submitted with your complete application to the agency where you are applying for Federal employment.

23. Question. How do I obtain the signature of the Appointing Officer on the Standard Form 15 (SF-15)?

Answer. The agency to which you are applying for Federal employment will secure the signature of the Appointing Officer. Be sure to submit a SF-15, to include supporting documentation with your completed application.

24. Question. Where can I get information on special hiring authorities for veterans such as the Veterans Employment Opportunity Act of 1998 (VEOA), Veterans Recruitment Act (VRA), and the 30% or More Disabled Veteran Hiring Authority?

Answer. You will find the most current information regarding special hiring authorities on the Feds Hire Vets Web site at:
<http://www.fedshirevets.gov/job/shav/index.aspx>.

25. Question. The job posting that I am applying to indicates that I must submit proof of my service-connected disability rating. What do I send as proof of my service-connected disability?

Answer. You can request a letter certifying that you have a service-connected disability from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). To request the letter call VA at 1-800-827-1000. Or visit www.ebenefits.gov to obtain information.

26. Do veterans' preference points apply to appointments made under VEOA?

Answer. No. Veterans' preference points do not apply to merit promotion announcements using VEOA. VEOA allows certain veterans to apply to vacancy announcements that are open under merit promotions procedures outside of the agency's workforce.

27. Question. Can a current career/career conditional employee who lacks time-in-grade apply as a VEOA candidate under an agency merit promotion announcement when the agency is accepting applications from outside its workforce?

Answer. No. Such an employee remains subject to time-in-grade restrictions. However, a current career conditional employee is not restricted from applying to this type of announcements when there is a demographic area of consideration.

28. Question. If I accept an appointment at one grade level, am I eligible to accept another appointment at a higher grade level without meeting time-in-grade requirements?

Answer. Maybe, if you are applying under merit promotion procedures, time-in-grade is required. However, if your appointment is based on a selection from an open competitive examination of eligible or under a direct hire authority, then the answer may be no. Check with the hiring Agency Human Resources Office to which you are applying for employment to find out how this will apply in your case.

29. Question. I am a current Federal employee. Can I use my veterans' preference when applying for vacancy announcements open to all U.S. citizens?

Answer. Yes. There is no limit to the number of times you can use veterans' preference.

30. Question. How do I obtain a copy of my SF-50?

Answer. Visit <http://www.archives.gov/st-louis/> for information pertaining to replacement of SF-50 or contact the agency you worked for Human Resources Office for assistance.

31. Question. Now that I am a Federal employee, how do I get credit for my military service time for leave accrual?

Answer. You can locate information about creditable military service for leave accrual within the Creditable Service for Leave Accrual section on the OPM Web site at: <http://www.opm.gov/oca/leave/html/annual.asp>.

32. Question. Now that I am a Federal employee, where can I find information about creditable military service for retirement purposes?

Answer. You can locate information about creditable military service for retirement purposes within the OPM Federal Employee Retirement System Handbook which is located on the OPM website at:

<http://www.opm.gov/retire/pubs/pamphlets/RI90-3.pdf>.

33. Question. I have never been in the military; however, my spouse is a veteran and currently works for the Federal Government. Am I able to claim veterans' preference as a spouse when applying for Federal jobs?

Answer. No. You may not receive veterans' preference in Federal employment as the spouse of a veteran if the veteran is living and qualified for Federal employment.

34. Question. I have never been in the military, however; my son/daughter is a severely disabled veteran and unable to work. Am I eligible for veterans' preference when applying for Federal jobs?

Answer. Maybe, the mother of a disabled veteran may be eligible to claim veterans' preference when the veteran is unable to use it. Further details on the specific criteria that must be met can be found

at: <http://www.fedshirevets.gov/job/familypref/index.aspx>.

35. Question. I believe my veterans' preference rights were violated. What can I do?

Answer. You may file a complaint with the Department of Labor's Veterans Employment and Training Service. This is the agency designated by law, to investigate violations of veterans' preference. Information on how to file a complaint may be found at:

<http://www.dol.gov/elaws/vetspref.htm>.

36. Question. I believe that a Federal agency is conducting prohibited personnel practices. Will OPM investigate my complaint against this agency?

Answer. No. While OPM provides government-wide leadership on Federal programs and policies, OPM does not investigate individual complaints alleging prohibited personnel practices. Complaints alleging prohibited personnel practices and retaliation should be directed to the Office of Special Counsel (OSC). OSC receives, investigates, and prosecutes allegations of prohibited personnel practices and can be visited at www.osc.gov.

37. Question. I believe that a Federal agency is conducting discriminatory practices; what can I do?

Answer. If you believe you have a complaint regarding discrimination, you may file a complaint with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission web site found at www.eeoc.gov provides information on filing a discrimination complaint.

38. Question. What is a Reduction in Force (RIF)?

Answer. In the Federal Government, layoffs are called reduction in force (RIF) actions. When an agency must abolish positions, RIF regulations determine whether an employee keeps his or her present position, or whether the employee has a right to a different position. For additional information, visit <http://www.opm.gov/rif/general/rifguide.asp>.

39. Question. How can I file for VA Disability/Vocational Rehabilitation benefits?

Answer. You should contact the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs or one of the many Veteran Service Organizations for assistance in filing for claims of disability and benefits. <http://www.vba.va.gov/bln/21/compensation/>.

40. Question. Does OPM have employment data that demonstrates Federal Agencies are hiring veterans?

Answer. Yes. On the Feds Hires Vets website, OPM posts employment data that shows Federal agency hiring of veterans. The report, "Employment of Veterans in the Federal Executive Branch of Government," shows data for veterans being hired in the Federal Government.