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NASA Procedural Requirements

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NPR 3335.1G

Effective Date: July 18,
2005

Expiration Date:
December 18, 2010

[Printable Format \(PDF\)](#)

Request Notification of Change

(NASA Only)

Subject: Internal Placement of NASA Employees

Responsible Office: Office of Human Capital Management

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PART I. Chapter 3. Competitive Procedures

3.1 When Competitive Procedures Are Required

3.1.1 For selections of all the following actions and all other promotions not excluded in paragraph 3.2:

- a. Temporary promotions over 120 days. In computing the 120 days, prior service under all noncompetitive details to higher graded positions or noncompetitive temporary promotions during the preceding 12 months is included. If appropriate, the option to make these promotions permanent, without additional competition, must be in the announcement. (Note: Competition is not required if the individual has previously held, or successfully competed for, the higher grade on a permanent basis.)
- b. Details of more than 120 days to a higher graded position or to a position with greater promotion potential. If appropriate, the option of extending the detail without additional competition must be stated in the announcement. (Note: Competition is not required if the individual has previously held, or successfully competed for, the higher grade on a permanent basis.)
- c. Training that is required for promotion.
- d. Reassignment, or change to a lower grade, to a nontemporary position with more promotion potential than a nontemporary position previously held (except when permitted by reduction-in-force regulations).

3.1.2 Term employees who meet conversion requirements under the NASA Flexibility Act of 2004 may be selected for permanent appointment under competitive placement procedures.

3.1.2.1 To be eligible for conversion, an employee must meet the following criteria:

a. The employee must have been selected for a term position under a competitive announcement stating that the individual(s) selected might be converted to permanent appointment.

b. The employee must have at least 2 years of continuous service under a term appointment in the competitive service. The service need not have been performed entirely at NASA.

c. The employee's performance must be fully successful or better for the 2-year period preceding conversion. Documentation of level of performance is required prior to effecting the conversion. (Note: Under the NASA performance system, the employee must have a rating of at least "meets or exceeds expectations.")

3.1.2.2 Employees meeting the criteria for competitive conversion may be considered equally with NASA permanent employees for any positions for which they qualify. (See Section 3.2.11 for criteria for noncompetitive conversion.)

3.2 When Competitive Procedures Are Not Required

3.2.1 Promotion resulting from reclassification of a position (without significant change in duties and responsibilities) on the basis of either issuance of a new classification standard or the correction of a classification error.

3.2.2 A position change permitted by reduction-in-force regulations.

3.2.3 Any action including a promotion, directed by an individual or organization with authority that supersedes this Plan. These include, but are not limited to, actions as a result of discrimination complaint decisions, court decisions, settlement of judicial or administrative cases, or arbitrators' decisions.

3.2.4 A career promotion, when:

a. The employee's position is reclassified because of additional duties and responsibilities.

b. Competition was held at an earlier stage (e.g., Office of Personnel Management (OPM) register, NASA Competitive Placement Plan, or other approved competitive process such as direct hire or delegated examining authorities) and the promotion is to a grade at or below the full performance level of the position.

c. Promotion following noncompetitive conversion of a Cooperative Education student, a Veteran's Readjustment Act (VRA) appointee, Federal Career Intern, or other such authorized actions.

3.2.5 Selection of current or former Federal employees from another competitive staffing authority, such as Direct Hire.

3.2.6 Movement to a position having the same (or lower) potential than a current or prior position held on a nontemporary basis.

3.2.7 Temporary promotions for periods of 120 days or fewer.

3.2.8 Details for 120 days or fewer to higher graded positions or positions with promotion potential.

3.2.9 Repromotion, transfer, or reinstatement up to the highest grade previously held on a permanent basis under a career or career-conditional appointment, unless demoted for personal cause or unacceptable performance.

3.2.10 Selection of a candidate from the Reemployment Priority List.

3.2.11 Term employees may be noncompetitively converted to a career or career-conditional appointment under the following circumstances:

a. The employee must have been selected for a term position under a competitive announcement stating that the individual(s) selected might be converted to permanent appointment.

b. The individual must have at least 2 years of continuous service under a term appointment in the competitive service. The service need not have been performed entirely at NASA.

c. The individual's performance must be fully successful or better for the 2-year period preceding conversion. Documentation of level of performance is required prior to effecting the conversion. (Note: Under the NASA performance system, the employee must have a rating of at least "meets or exceeds expectations.")

d. The position for which the individual is competing is in the same geographic location, and is in the same occupational series, and has no greater promotion potential than the term position currently held. (Note: If all of the criteria in this paragraph are not met, the employee may be eligible under competitive conversion procedures. See Section 3.1.2.)

3.3 Special Considerations

3.3.1 Special Consideration for Repromotion or Reassignment

3.3.1.1 Employees who have been demoted in NASA without personal cause are entitled to special consideration for repromotion or reassignment.

3.3.1.2 This special consideration applies to positions at the employee's former grade or any intervening grades that are to be filled under this Plan.

3.3.1.3 The right to special consideration does not apply to any position with a projected promotion potential higher than the retained grade or the grade held at the time the change to lower grade was effected.

3.3.1.4 This special consideration is to be given at the NASA Center where the employee was demoted and is currently employed.

3.3.1.5 The entitlement to special consideration will begin as of the effective date of the action on which the eligibility is based and will continue for a 2-year period, unless the employee declines a reasonable offer of a position as defined in OPM regulations. If an employee accepts an equivalent position within the 2-year period, eligibility ends with the effective date of the action.

3.3.2 Correction of Procedural Error

3.3.2.1 An employee who was not afforded proper consideration, due to a harmful procedural error in a previous competitive placement action, must be given priority consideration for the next appropriate (i.e., similar) vacancy filled under this Plan. "Appropriate" vacancy is defined in Appendix B.

3.3.2.2 Priority consideration means that the employee must be referred to the selecting official for consideration before other candidates are considered under these competitive procedures. If selected on the basis of the priority consideration, the employee may be promoted or reassigned as an exception to the competitive procedures of this Plan.

3.3.2.3 When an employee is referred for priority consideration but is not selected, this decision must be documented in the Competitive Placement Record.

3.4 Area of Consideration

3.4.1 The minimum area of consideration for positions advertised under this Plan will be NASAwide, unless otherwise specified in the announcement. The basis for a decision to use a smaller minimum area must be documented in the Competitive Placement Record.

3.4.2 When the minimum area of consideration fails to identify sufficient high-quality and diverse candidates, the area may be extended.

3.5 Announcements

3.5.1. Announcements will conform to the requirements of the NASA STARS vacancy builder. In addition to minimum Federal information requirements, announcements will also include:

- a. A statement concerning payment or nonpayment of relocation allowances must be included in the announcement if the area of consideration extends beyond the local commuting area
- b. In accordance with the Agency's Plan for a Drug-Free Workplace, the announcement must indicate whenever the vacancy is for a Testing Designated Position.
- c. A statement regarding the need for a security clearance must be included if the position designation is other than nonsensitive.

3.5.2 For positions filled under this Plan, an announcement must be posted on a publicized web site or other location available to Center employees.

3.6 Application Period

3.6.1 Specific Vacancies

3.6.1.1 Announcements shall generally remain open for at least 5 workdays. A shorter open period may be used if large numbers of qualified and diverse applicants are anticipated and the case file is documented as to the rationale for the reduced open period.

3.6.1.2 Employees shall be advised at least annually where vacancy announcements for other Centers can be reviewed.

3.6.2 Recurring Vacancies. Vacancy announcements with closing dates of up to 1 year from the initial opening date, i.e., "open continuous," may be used to advertise recurring vacancies. All employees who file under such announcements will be automatically considered for all covered vacancies filled after the submission of their application, providing they comply with all instructions in the vacancy announcement.

3.6.3 Like Vacancies. A selection certificate may be reissued to fill like vacancies if the selection(s) can be made within 90 days of issuance of the original certificate. A "like vacancy" is considered to be one with the same title, series, grade, promotion potential, and duty location; the primary duties of the position are similar and require possession of the same knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) or competencies.

3.7 Application Procedures

3.7.1 General Procedures

3.7.1.1 A résumé is required for all positions filled under NASA's automated Staffing and Recruitment System (NASA STARS). Optional application forms, such as the Optional Application for Federal Employment (OF 612) will not be accepted under NASA STARS.

3.7.1.2 Applicants are responsible for ensuring that their résumés are up to date and properly reflect current employment status and qualifications.

3.7.2 Acceptance of Applications

3.7.2.1 Electronic résumés must be received by midnight, central time, on the closing date of the announcement. Hard-copy résumés must be received by close of business on the closing date.

3.7.2.2 The Center's Human Resources Officer (or designee) may grant an extension of the application deadline if circumstances warrant. All applicants who are known to be in like circumstances must be granted the extension. All decisions to extend the closing date must be documented in the Competitive Placement Record.

3.7.2.3 It is the applicants' obligation to present their qualifications for the position. Individuals who submit some, but not all, required information will be ineligible for consideration for the position.

3.7.3 Supervisory Referrals

Upon an employee's written request (e-mail or hard copy), the supervisor must submit the employee's name for appropriate vacancies announced during an employee's absence. Prior to making the request, the employee must ensure that she/he has completed a résumé. The employee's written request must provide the supervisor with all of the information necessary to use the designated application process.

3.8 Concurrent Consideration of Outside Applicants

3.8.1 Applicants who are eligible for transfer or reinstatement may, at the option of the Center, be given concurrent consideration with NASA employees under this Plan. Such applicants will be evaluated using the same criteria as NASA employees and compete with NASA employees for consideration.

3.8.2 Applicants who are neither current Federal employees nor transfer or

reinstatement eligibles do not compete under the provisions of this Plan, except for veterans eligible for consideration under the Veterans Employment Opportunity Authority (VEOA). Veterans eligible under the VEOA may compete under this Plan only when positions are open to applicants outside of the Agency. (Note: If an announcement is open to the acceptance of applications under this Plan and also from external candidates, VEOA provisions do not apply. Such individuals shall compete as external candidates.)

3.9 Determining Basic Qualifications

3.9.1 The minimum qualification standards prescribed or approved by OPM (including any required written tests and selective factors) will be used to determine basic eligibility of candidates for competitive consideration. These standards are to be available in the Center's Human Resources Office for review by candidates.

3.9.2 Selective factors (i.e., KSAs or competencies essential for satisfactory performance in the position to be filled) are part of the minimum qualification standards. Justification for use of selective factors will be recorded in the Competitive Placement Record. Vacancy announcements will identify the minimum qualification standards (including selective factors).

3.9.3 Applicants must meet time-in-grade and time-after-competitive-appointment requirements by the closing date of the vacancy announcement to be eligible for consideration for selection.

3.10 Evaluation of Candidates

3.10.1 General Information

3.10.1.1 Candidates eligible for noncompetitive selection need not be rated or referred under this Plan, but may be referred separately, outside of competitive procedures, to the selecting official.

3.10.1.2 Selections made under this Plan will be made from among the best available qualified candidates based upon job-related evaluation criteria.

3.10.2 Methods of Evaluation

3.10.2.1 The skills or competencies used in evaluating candidates for competitive placement will be identified on the basis of a job analysis and must be supported by the position description.

3.10.2.2 The skills or competencies and the rating criteria must be developed jointly by the Center's Human Resources Officer and the selecting official (or their designees). The basis of rating and specific duties required for successful performance on the position must be included in the announcement.

3.10.2.3 The degree to which applicants possess the skills or competencies will be determined through an evaluation of pertinent information such as experience, education and training, awards, and performance appraisals. The evaluation process will consist of the use of an automated rating process and further evaluation by the selecting official (or designee).

3.10.3 Ranking and Selection

3.10.3.1 The ranking process is intended to identify the relative degree to which applicants possess the specified skills or competencies. The Center's Human Resources Officer (or designee), after consultation with the selecting official, may waive the normal ranking process if there are 10 or fewer qualified applicants at a given grade level. In such cases, the qualified applicants will be further screened against job-related criteria. Applicants who are minimally qualified and possess the additional job-related criteria will be eligible for selection consideration.

3.10.3.2 When ranking is performed, applicants who meet the minimum qualifications of the position will be rated on either a numerical scale (e.g., 70, 80, and 90) or a nominal scale (e.g., Qualified, Highly Qualified, Exceptionally Qualified). The rating process must measure all applicants against the same job criteria (skills) or competencies.

3.10.3.3 In cases where there are a large number of candidates in the top evaluation group, applicants may be further evaluated by identifying those who possess the skills determined to be most important for successful performance.

3.10.3.4 Once applicants are rated, they will be ranked in order. The Center's Human Resources Officer (or designee) will consult the selecting official (or designee) to determine the point in this order above which all candidates will be referred. This will be the point at which there is some meaningful distinction between the candidates above and below that point.

3.11 Competitive Placement Certificates

Candidates will be listed on the certificate in alphabetical order. Any employee listed on the certificate is eligible for selection. If no selection has been made within 30 days of the date the certificate was issued, the certificate will be canceled unless the Center's Human Resources Officer (or designee) approves an extension. With appropriate justification, the selecting official may have up to two 30-day extensions. In no case will the certificate be extended beyond 90 days.

3.12 Interviews

The selecting official and/or designee(s) may conduct interviews (including telephone interviews) of some, all, or none of the candidates.

3.13 Release

The Center's Human Resources Officer (or designee) will arrange for the expeditious release of the selectee from his or her current position.

3.14 Timeliness

Each Center will determine appropriate procedures to ensure the timeliness of all activities associated with this Plan.

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