



UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

Washington, DC 20415

Merit System Audit  
and Compliance

June 14, 2010

MEMORANDUM FOR HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTORS

FROM:

JEFFREY SUMBERG  
Associate Director  
Merit System Audit and Compliance

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Sumberg", written over the printed name and title.

SUBJECT:

Oversight of Hiring Reform

Reforming the Federal hiring process is the top human capital priority for President Obama and the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) under Director John Berry's leadership. The President's Memorandum dated May 11, 2010, entitled *Improving the Federal Recruitment and Hiring Process*, directed OPM to hold agencies accountable for "improving the quality and speed of agency hiring, achieving agency hiring reform targets, and satisfying merit system principles and veterans' preference requirements."

Merit System Audit and Compliance (MSAC) carries out OPM's statutory oversight responsibilities, ensuring that agency human resources (HR) programs adhere to merit system principles, operate effectively, and meet requirements set by law, regulation, and Government-wide policy. As part of our oversight authority, and in accordance with the President's Memorandum, OPM will evaluate agency hiring reform initiatives to ensure that agencies comply with merit system principles and meet the President's reform objectives.

OPM has integrated hiring reform oversight into the three core components of our existing oversight and compliance activities: Delegated Examining Unit evaluations; OPM-led HR evaluations; and agency-led HR evaluations carried out under an OPM-approved HR accountability system. We will use tools and data collection methods familiar to your HR staff, such as records review, interviews, and questionnaires.

OPM wants agencies to clearly understand what we will look for in our oversight of hiring reform. To help in this regard, I am enclosing the Delegated Examining Review Checklist that OPM's evaluators will use in connection with our Delegated Examining evaluations. Hiring reform criteria are covered in Section A. I have also attached OPM's Hiring Reform Evaluation Report Template, which describes the outcomes we expect from hiring reform. Agencies are encouraged to use the Evaluation Template when conducting their own HR evaluations under their HR accountability program.

I hope this information is helpful to your agency as it works to meet the President's hiring reform goals. If you have questions about OPM's oversight of hiring reform, please contact Ana Mazzi, Deputy Associate Director, at 202-606-4309 or at [ana.mazzi@opm.gov](mailto:ana.mazzi@opm.gov).

Attachments (2)

# DELEGATED EXAMINING ACTION REVIEW

Agency:		Location:		OPM-Led _____	SAA _____
Selectee(s):		Effective Date:		NOAC/Nature of Action:	
				LAC/Legal Authority:	
Title, Pay Plan/Series/Grade:		MCO Y ___ N ___	Top Ten Y ___ N ___	# Well-Qualified ICTAP:	
Organization:				SF-52 or Request Date: ____/____/____	
Announcement Number:	Category Rating Y ___ N ___	Open Date: ____/____/____		Close Date: ____/____/____	
Certificate Number:		Date Certificate Issued: ____/____/____		Total # of Certificates Issued: at Grade(s)	
# Applied:	# Qualified:	Date Certificate Returned: ____/____/____		Date of Panel or Rating: ____/____/____	
# VP Qualified: _____		# Referred		# Selected	
Breakdown:		# VP _____	# NV _____	# VP _____	# NV _____
GS-( ) CPS ___ CP ___ XP ___ TP ___		GS-( ) _____	GS-( ) _____	GS-( ) _____	GS-( ) _____
GS-( ) CPS ___ CP ___ XP ___ TP ___		GS-( ) _____	GS-( ) _____	GS-( ) _____	GS-( ) _____
GS-( ) CPS ___ CP ___ XP ___ TP ___		GS-( ) _____	GS-( ) _____	GS-( ) _____	GS-( ) _____
GS-( ) CPS ___ CP ___ XP ___ TP ___		GS-( ) _____	GS-( ) _____	GS-( ) _____	GS-( ) _____
# VP Applications Reviewed:	#VP Applications Properly Adjudicated:	VP Properly Adjudicated Y _____ N _____		Veterans referred in proper order Y ___ N ___	

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Use this checklist in conjunction with the Delegated Examining Program Review checklist and the Delegated Examining Operations Handbook (DEOH). Delegated examining authority applies to filling temporary, term, and permanent competitive positions (see DEOH 2-A).

Y	N	REVIEW ITEM	COMMENTS
<b>A. HIRING REFORM INITIATIVES</b> (Hiring Reform data collected below will be used as <u>baseline and trend data only</u> and should not be included in evaluation reports. No required or recommended actions should be generated for JOAs that close before November 1, 2010.)			
		A1. JOA is 5 pages or less	
		A2. JOA is written in plain language, free of Federal jargon, with meaningful definition(s) of qualifying specialized experience specific to the position advertised	
		A3. Applicants may apply by submitting a resume and cover letter or by completing a simple, plain language application	
		A4. KSA narrative responses or essay-style questionnaires are not required at time of initial application	
		A5. Application requirements are reasonable so as not to pose unnecessary burdens to the applicants (e.g., official college transcript is not required at time of application)	
		A6. Explanation of what applicant can expect next (e.g., what happens after application has been submitted, expected timeframe for selection/job offer)	
		A7. Agency provides timely notification to applicants about status at key points of the hiring process (e.g., application received; meets/does not meet minimum eligibility and qualification requirements; referred/not referred on Certificate of Eligibles; selected/not selected). Notifications may be combined (minimum of two notifications unless applicant is ineligible).	



# DELEGATED EXAMINING ACTION REVIEW

Y	N	REVIEW ITEM	COMMENTS
<b>B. JOA CONTENTS AND USE OF LINKS (Required information is highlighted. Information contained in links should be reviewed for accuracy and completeness) [5 U.S.C. 3327 and 3330, 5 CFR 330.707, E.O. 13078]</b>			
		B1. Agency name	
		B2. Announcement number	
		B3. Title of the position	
		B4. Series, pay plan, and grade (or pay rate)	
		B5. Entrance pay	
		<b>B6. Promotion potential</b>	
		B7. Opening date	
		B8. Closing date	
		B9. Cut-off dates or how application receipt will be controlled	
		B10. Type of appointment (i.e., permanent, term, or temporary, including NTE dates)	
		B11. Duty location	
		B12. Number of vacancies	
		<b>B13. Citizenship requirement [5 CFR 338.101]</b>	
		<b>B14. Selective Service requirement [5 CFR 300.701]</b>	
		B15. Brief description of duties	
		B16. Qualification requirements for each grade level (including KSAs/competencies and selective placement factors)	
		B17. Basis of rating (how candidates will be evaluated)	
		B18. Quality categories defined for category rating	
		B19. What to file	
		B20. Instructions on how to apply	
		B21. How to claim veterans' preference	
		B22. Agency definition of well-qualified and how CTAP/ICTAP candidates may apply, including proof of eligibility	
		B23. EEO statement	
		B24. Reasonable accommodation statement	
		B25. Procedures for obtaining additional information (e.g., P.O.C., e-mail address, telephone number)	
		B26. Employee benefits	
		B27. Special conditions when one announcement is used	
		B28. Additional items (physical requirements, gender restriction, part-time or intermittent employment, shift work, unusual tours of duty, travel requirements, minimum/maximum entry age, mandatory interview, etc.) [DEOH 6-A]	
		B29. For positions restricted to preference eligibles (custodian, messenger, guard, elevator operator) - whether applications will be accepted from non-preference eligibles and, if so, that they will not be considered if veterans are available [5 U.S.C. 3310 and 5 CFR 330.401]	
<b>C. RECRUITMENT ACTIVITIES</b>			
		Recruitment activities are consistent with the goal of building and maintaining a diverse Federal workforce [5 CFR 720.204]	



# DELEGATED EXAMINING ACTION REVIEW

Y	N	REVIEW ITEM	COMMENTS
<b>D. PUBLIC NOTICE REQUIREMENTS [5 U.S.C. 3327; DEOH 3-B; 5 CFR 330.102 &amp; 330.707(a)]</b>			
		Job announced on USAJOBS, including those filled from standing inventories or automated system	
		Announcements are open consistent with the policies the agency has established	
<b>E. APPLICATION ACCEPTANCE PROCEDURES [DEOH 4-A]</b>			
		The DEU follows any agency-wide policy and procedures for accepting and processing applications from all applicants, including status applicants	
		Postmarks from mailed applications are annotated	
		Late applications are appropriately accepted or rejected. For extensions, response dates are given to applicants who request application materials by the closing date	
		Incomplete applications are considered in accordance with agency policy. In the absence of such policy, consideration is based on information provided or requests for more information are sent to applicants	
		The DEU prohibits use of Government franked envelopes [18 U.S.C. 1719]	
<b>F. CLEARANCE OF APPLICABLE PRIORITY PLACEMENT PROGRAMS</b>			
		CTAP [5 CFR 330.608] or for DoD only: DoD Priority Placement Program authorized by OPM in lieu of CTAP [5 CFR 330.601(c) and DoD 1400.20-1-M]	
		RPL [5 CFR 330.207]	
		ICTAP [5 CFR 330.708]	
<b>G. EXAMINING FILE CONTENTS</b>			
		Request for referral of certificate of eligibles (SF 39, SF 52 or other method used in accordance with agency policy)	
		Position description	
		Applicable qualification standard	
		Justification for selective placement factor(s) [DEOH 5-B]	
		In cases of gender restriction, documentation of OPM approval [5 CFR 332.407]	
		Job analysis documents	
		Rating plan/assessment tool(s) and transmutation table	
		Occupational questionnaire (point values match rating plan)	
		Application forms for name requests [DEOH 6-B]	
		OMB-approved supplemental application form, if used	
		Eligibility and qualification determinations	
		Ratings of applicants	
		Tie breaking method, if used	



# DELEGATED EXAMINING ACTION REVIEW

Y	N	REVIEW ITEM	COMMENTS
		Certificate(s) of eligibles	
		Case files can be reconstructed for audit purposes (copy of the selectee's application in file is recommended)	
<b>H. JOB ANALYSIS AND RATING PLAN/ASSESSMENT TOOL</b>			
		Job analysis identifies the following [5 CFR 300.103(a)]	
		1. Basic duties and responsibilities	
		2. KSAs/competencies required to perform the duties	
		3. Factors important in evaluating candidates	
		4. One or more SMEs involved in job analysis	
		Acceptable rating plan is used [DEOH 5-B]	
		Rating plan/assessment tool is consistent with job analysis [5 CFR 300.103(b)]	
		SMEs/HR professionals who participated in the development of rating plan/assessment tool are identified	
<b>I. REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS</b>			
		Applications are reviewed for legally required information	
		Applicant is a citizen or national of the United States [8 U.S.C 1408; 5 CFR 7.3(a); 5 CFR 338.101(a)]	
		Date of birth (when age is a factor for certain law enforcement, firefighter, air traffic controller, and other positions) [5 U.S.C. 3307 and 5 CFR 338.601]	
		OF 306 verifies Selective Service registration prior to appointment [5 U.S.C. 3328 and 5 CFR part 300, subpart G]	
		Qualification determinations are accurate (superior academic achievement is documented if it is the basis for eligibility) [5 CFR 338.301 and DEOH 5-B]	
<p><b>Note:</b> Original signatures on applications are not required.</p> <p>DoD only – retired members of the Armed Forces may be appointed to positions in the civil service in or under DoD during the 180 days immediately after retirement or when still in a terminal leave status without regard to obtaining authorization under 5 U.S.C. 3326(b)(1) [DoD Memorandum 24 September 2001, Appointment of Retired Members of the Armed Forces to Positions in the Department of Defense]</p>			
<b>J. ASSESSMENT OF CANDIDATES</b>			
		Rating/quality category placement determinations are accurate in accordance with KSAs and rating plan	
		Reconsideration of rating decisions handled properly	
<b>K. VETERANS' PREFERENCE</b>			
		Veterans' preference is properly adjudicated [5 U.S.C. 2108 and 3309; DEOH 4-B]	
		Documentation required is consistent with agency policy	



# DELEGATED EXAMINING ACTION REVIEW

Y	N	REVIEW ITEM	COMMENTS
<b>L. CERTIFICATION AND SELECTION PROCEDURES</b>			
		Certificate of Eligibles contains the following:	
		1. Certificate number, including the FY (a system is in place to identify certificates)	
		2. Title, series, grade, and duty location of position	
		3. Names of certified eligibles and addresses/phone numbers if applications are not sent with certificate	
		4. Numerical rating/quality category of each eligible certified, including veteran's preference points when applicable (N/A for category rating), and appropriate veterans' preference symbols.	
		5. Signature of issuing official	
		6. Issue date of certificate	
		7. Due date of certificate	
		Order of certification is proper [5 U.S.C. 3313; 5 CFR 330.705; DEOH 6-B or 5 U.S.C 3319; 5 CFR 337.303; DEOH 5-B]	
		For category rating, all eligibles in the highest quality category are referred to the selecting official (5 U.S.C. 3319; 5 CFR 337; DEOH 5-B)	
		For category rating, proper procedures are followed if merging categories (merging is optional and may be done only before a certificate is issued if there are fewer than 3 eligibles in the highest quality category and/or when fewer than 3 <i>available</i> eligibles remain in the highest quality category. All preference eligibles are placed at the top of the newly merged category) [DEOH 5-B]	
		Tie breakers are used properly [DEOH 6-B]	
		Supplemental certificates are issued properly [DEOH 6-B]	
		Selections are from the highest three eligibles available for appointment [5 CFR 332.404-405] or from eligibles in the highest quality category [5 CFR 337]	
		Selections are consistent with ranking certification [5 U.S.C. 3318 and 3319; 5 CFR 332.404-405; DEOH 6-C]	
		Selecting official properly documents actions (selections, declinations, etc.) and signs and dates the returned certificate as documentation for the file [DEOH 6-C]	
		Selecting officials return certificates promptly after making selections [DEOH 6-C]	
		Pass overs of preference eligibles and/or objections are handled properly [5 U.S.C. 3312 and 3318; 5 CFR 332.406; 5 CFR 339]	
		Certificates are audited upon return in accordance with agency's policy [DEOH 6-C]	



# DELEGATED EXAMINING ACTION REVIEW

Y	N	REVIEW ITEM	COMMENTS
<b>M. NOTIFICATION OF PERSONNEL ACTION(S)</b>			
<i>Codes and authorities on SF 50/SF 52 are correct:</i>			
		Legal authority and nature of action codes	
		Veterans' preference	
		VP for RIF (block 26) and Annuitant Indicator (block 28) reflect military retiree status	
		Tenure group	
		FEGLI	
		Retirement plan	
		Pay determination is proper (for superior qualifications appt. pay rate determinant (block 29) is 7 (or 8) on initial SF 50 but reverts back to 0 (or 6) for subsequent actions)	
		Qualification standard on SF 52 if other than OPM	
<i>Remarks entered on SF 50 are correct:</i>			
		Probationary period	
		Service counting towards career tenure	
		Date appointment affidavit signed	
		Full performance level of the position	
		Eligibility for life insurance/health benefits	
		Creditable military service	
		Frozen service	
		Previous retirement coverage	
		Retirement plan	
<i>And, if appropriate:</i>			
		Credit for non-Federal or active duty uniformed service for leave purposes	
		Rate of pay remark if using pay-setting flexibilities	
		Reason for temporary appointment (reason stated)	
		Conditions of temporary employment remark	
<i>Forms filed chronologically on right (long-term) side of OPF:</i>			
		Resume/application for Federal employment	
		SF 61 (Appointment Affidavit), unless conversion action	
		OF 306 (Declaration of Federal Employment), signed twice by appointee and dated by HR office	
		SF 50 (Notification of Personnel Action)	
		SF 144 (Statement of Prior Federal Employment)	
		Health and life insurance forms	



# DELEGATED EXAMINING ACTION REVIEW

Y	N	REVIEW ITEM	COMMENTS
<i>When applicable:</i>			
		DD 214 (Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty) copy that includes <i>character of service</i>	
		SF 15 (Application for 10-Point Veteran Preference)	
		VA letter or active service retirement orders certifying service connected disability (with no medical information or properly sanitized)	
		Certification of Completed Investigation Notice	
		Retirement forms	
		Transcripts when education was used for qualifications	
<b>OTHER COMMENTS</b>			

Reviewer/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## Hiring Reform Evaluation Report Template

The President's Memorandum dated May 11, 2010, *Improving the Federal Recruitment and Hiring Process*, directed OPM to establish a Government-wide performance review and improvement process for hiring reform actions described in the Memorandum. The following table will assist agencies evaluate their hiring reform efforts as part of their accountability program.

**Applicable Merit System Principles:** The following merit system principles (MSPs) are especially relevant to the Talent Management system (5 U.S.C. 2301):

- Recruitment should be from qualified individuals from appropriate sources in an endeavor to achieve a workforce from all segments of society, and selection and advancement should be determined solely on the basis of relative ability, knowledge and skills, after fair and open competition which assures that all receive equal opportunity. [5 U.S.C. 2301(b)(1)]
- All employees and applicants for employment should receive fair and equitable treatment in all aspects of personnel management without regard to political affiliation, race, color, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, age, or handicapping condition, and with proper regard for their privacy and constitutional rights. [5 U.S.C. 2301(b)(2)]

**Law: Veterans Preference Act of 1944 (as amended)**

Expected Outcomes	Assessment	Findings/Required or Recommended Actions
Recruitment and hiring actions are consistent with merit system principles and related civil service requirements.	<input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Met <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met	
DE operations enable rather than deter the public from applying for vacancies (e.g., streamlined JOAs written in plain language with clear application procedures; meaningful definitions of qualifying specialized experience specific to positions advertised; clear descriptions of evaluation methods; initial submissions limited to resumes and cover letters or simple applications; no essays required at time of application).	<input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Met <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met	
The agency uses an assessment process based on professionally accepted standards that meet the validity provisions of the <i>Uniform Guidelines</i> .	<input type="checkbox"/> Met <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Met <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met	

<p>Applicants are assessed using category rating procedures. Use of the "rule of three" has been discontinued.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Met  <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Met  <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met</p>	
<p>The agency is working toward improving the quality and speed of hiring by (1) reducing time to fill mission-critical and commonly filled positions; (2) measuring the quality and speed of the hiring process; (3) analyzing the causes of hiring problems and actions to be taken to reduce them, and (4) training hiring managers on ways to recruit and hire well-qualified individuals.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Met  <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Met  <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met</p>	
<p>Hiring officials are involved in workforce planning, identifying skills required for the job, and actively engaged in the recruitment and interviewing process. They are held accountable for recruiting and hiring highly qualified employees and supporting their successful transition into Federal service.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Met  <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Met  <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met</p>	
<p>Applicants are timely notified about the status of their applications at key points of the hiring process (e.g., application received; meets/does not meet minimum eligibility/qualification requirements; referred/not referred on Certificate of Eligibles; selected/not selected).</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Met  <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Met  <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met</p>	
<p>Managers indicate satisfaction with the quality of applicants and timeliness of referrals.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Met  <input type="checkbox"/> Partially Met  <input type="checkbox"/> Not Met</p>	