

RECRUITMENT GUIDE

The Process!

Getting Started. In an effort to assist managers and supervisors in understanding the recruitment process and the array of options available, the following information on recruitment programs, authorities, and procedures is provided. Various recruiting considerations are explored and information is provided on special recruitment concerns, type of appointments, work schedules, and the recruitment process, itself. This by no means covers all authorities or options. It is hoped that this information will give you some ideas on where to start, what you might want to consider, and what is needed.

HR Help. The Human Resources (HR) Office, specifically the HR Specialist assigned to an organization, sometimes referred to as the Command Staff Advisor (CSA), is available to assist in the identification of the best alternatives for the situation. HR [Servicing Assignments](#) are established based on location and organizational responsibility. When faced with the need to recruit, contact with the Human Resources Representative is invaluable. Specific options can be discussed and the best course of action determined based on the specifics of each situation.

Guide is Divided into the Following Sections!

1. Career Opportunities with the Coast Guard (choices, benefits, locations)
2. Recruitment Considerations (make a plan)
3. Type of Appointments (permanent, term, temporary)
4. Work Schedules (full time, part time, intermittent, seasonal)
5. Diversity and EEO (special initiatives)
6. Priority Placement Programs (CGPP, PROP, RPL/PRL, CTAP, ICTAP)
7. Internal Recruitment Options (merit promotion, noncompetitive)
8. External Recruitment Options (competitive, excepted examining & special options)
9. Veterans' Programs (VEOA, 30% Compensable, VRA)
10. Hiring People With Disabilities (Schedule A, Schedule B)
11. Civilian Career Entry-Level Opportunity Program (CEO)
12. Career Development Programs (Student, PMI, UMP, Contract)
13. Volunteer Services (Armed Forces support, Student)
14. Procedures for SES & Attorney Positions
15. Initiating the Recruitment Process (Get Ready, Get Set, Fill)

1. CAREER OPPORTUNITIES WITH THE COAST GUARD

Coast Guard Employer of Choice!

Coast Guard Mission. The Coast Guard is a multi-mission maritime service and one of the Nation's five Armed Forces. Its mission is to protect the public, the environment, and U.S. economic interests – in the Nation's ports and waterways, along the coast, on international waters, or in any maritime region as required to support national security. Civilians play an important role in support of that mission. Because millions of Americans depend on the Coast Guard, we are always looking for well-qualified people to help us accomplish our mission.

Career Choices!

Many. The Coast Guard has an array of career fields available in professional, technical, administrative, clerical and trades and craft occupations. Coast Guard employees receive not only opportunities for career growth, but also the satisfaction of knowing that their efforts contribute significantly in ensuring the safety and security of our ports and waterways.

How Jobs Are Filled!

Competitive Service. Most civilian Coast Guard jobs are in the competitive service and are subject to employment procedures prescribed by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), where candidates compete for appointment. Competitive eligibility may be acquired through current or prior Federal service, by scoring high on a competitive examination, or by exceptions authorized by OPM. Competitive examinations given by OPM may be written tests or an evaluation of an individual's experience and education against stated job requirements. Appointments are usually career or career-conditional.

Status. Individuals who are now serving on a career or career-conditional appointment in the competitive service have competitive **status**. Individuals who have served on one of these types of appointments and have since left the Federal government may be eligible for reinstatement, depending upon length of service and veteran's preference. Those meeting the requirements for reinstatement also have **status**.

Excepted Service. Some positions are filled using excepted service appointing authorities like Veterans Readjustment Appointment (VRA), People with Disabilities, and Student Employment. They are not subject to competitive service procedures and may or may not be advertised.

Merit Promotion. The Coast Guard Merit Promotion Program provides for placement of current and former employees in the competitive service who have status. Depending on the type of position and the prospects for an ample pool of candidates, positions are often filled using only merit promotion procedures. Many merit promotion announcements may also solicit applications from noncompetitive eligibles like the VRA or people with disabilities.

Benefits!

Entitlements. The majority of Federal government employees are eligible for health and life insurance, retirement and thrift savings plan. They earn 13 to 26 days of paid vacation annually depending on length of service, and 13 days of paid sick leave annually with unlimited accumulation of unused sick leave. In addition to annual and sick leave, most Federal government employees have 10 paid holidays per year.

Office Locations - Many!

Map. Coast Guard sites are found all across the United States. The Coast Guard website has a [map](#) of specific units and locations.

Where Jobs Are Announced!

Most Positions Listed. At a minimum, our vacancy announcements are listed on USAJobs. The CG civilian jobs website at <http://www.uscg.mil/civilianjobs.htm> provides information about the Coast Guard jobs and a link to our positions at USAJobs at <http://www.usajobs.opm.gov>. Vacancy announcements will provide information about the vacancy but if additional information is needed, each announcement has a contact number to call.

Attorney Jobs. In addition to the Coast Guard Civilian jobs website and USAJobs, attorney positions are also posted at: <http://www.attorneyjobsonline.com>.

The Coast Guard is an equal opportunity employer.

2. RECRUITMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Identify the Vacancy!

Responsibility. The manager's first responsibility in the recruiting process is the identification of a specific vacancy, either through the establishment of a new position or the vacating of a current position. Any recruitment action must have the proper budgetary and organizational clearances and approvals to be filled.

Ask Yourself. There are various questions to be asked:

- Is the work of a permanent or temporary nature?
- What type of position should be filled?
- If temporary, could a term appointment be used?
- What has been the reason(s) for turnover?

- Should the position be filled internally or externally?
- What are the potential recruitment/training costs?
- What is the recruitment history for the type of position?

Consider. Whether the decision is to fill the vacancy internally or externally, there are considerations to be given to the potential applicant pool, recruitment sources, diversity and affirmative action goals. These items should be discussed with the assigned HR Specialist.

Applicant Pool. If there is a good candidate pool from within the agency, the vacancy could be filled from internal placement or merit promotion. Generally, when attempting to fill a position, the manager should consider candidates from several different sources. A manager should not stop recruitment efforts after locating just one good candidate. A manager should attempt to develop a diverse applicant pool and make a decision from among several good candidates from various sources against job-related criteria.

Game Plan!

What To Do. Here's a brief recruitment outline once the decision to recruit has been authorized. The manager should:

- Decides what position(s) will be filled AND at what location(s);
- Decide what, if any, selective factors are needed in recruiting (a selective factor is something that is absolutely required to perform the job, e.g., bilingual skills);
- Establish approximately when the candidate needs to be on board to determine when recruitment efforts should be initiated;
- Discuss with the CSA alternatives for filling the job and possible recruitment sources:
 - ◆ Consider any non-competitive options.
 - ◆ Anticipate if merit promotion sources will provide an ample candidate pool (i.e., within local command, local commuting area, within Coast Guard, or within the Federal government).
 - ◆ If there is little or no chance of finding quality candidates from internal sources, a decision could be made to recruit from external candidates (general public).
 - ◆ To afford the most opportunities for both, applicants and managers, the decision could be to use All Sources (includes both merit promotion eligibles and the general public).
 - ◆ Special hiring authorities can also be considered (VRA, VEOA, handicapped, student employment, worker trainee, etc.). Typically if announcements are open to candidates outside the Coast Guard, VRA, VEOA, and handicapped applications are accepted.

Target Recruitment. Managers may want to target recruitment to consider:

- Underrepresented groups (to increase opportunities for diversity)
- Additional sources (e.g., local organizations, community colleges, veterans groups, state agencies, churches, civic groups).
- Job or college fairs (check schedules).

- Other contacts to help target recruiting to provide a diverse and quality applicant pool.

Where to Advertise. Managers can discuss various advertisement choices for seeking candidates for the vacancy with the assigned HR Specialist:

- Coast Guard Web site (provides general information a link to vacancies)
- OPM Web site (all announcements appear here)
- Newspaper ads*
- Church bulletins
- Cable TV
- Internet
- Headhunter agencies

(*For hard to fill vacancies, it might be helpful to place newspaper ads prior to the issuing of the recruitment bulletins. This “greases the skids” to help get candidates apply to the vacancy announcement. Groups can be notified about upcoming ads, so that potential candidates can be ready to apply when the job is announced. Each organization funds any costs associated with advertising vacancies; there are no central funds available for this.)

There are many ways to fill vacancies.

3. TYPES OF APPOINTMENT

Permanent Appointment!

Most Appointments Permanent. Permanent appointments are either career-conditional or career. Career-conditional appointments are generally used for initial appointments into the federal service. Once an employee completes three years of continuous service under a career-conditional appointment, the appointment becomes career.

Selection. Appointments are generally made from open-competitive recruitment. Employees may also be selected on the basis of reinstatement eligibility (status), veterans' preference appointment, or some other appropriate authority.

Probationary Period. The first year of service of a permanent appointment is a probationary or trial period. Permanent employees have the protection in adverse actions (5 USC 4303 and 5 USC 7511) except while serving a probationary/trial period.

Competitive Status. A permanent appointment confers competitive status. Permanent employees may be reassigned, promoted, or demoted to other jobs within the agency and are eligible for transfer to other agencies. Time after competitive appointment restrictions apply (limits movements within the first 90 days after appointment).

Benefits. Permanent employees typically work full-time or part-time work schedules; are eligible for retirement benefits, health insurance, and life insurance, earn annual and sick leave, and are eligible for within-grade increases. Some employees may work intermittent work schedules and, while they are not eligible for most benefits and do not earn leave, they are covered by the retirement system.

Reference: 5CFR 315, Career and Career-conditional Employment

Term Appointment!

Length and Reason for Term. Term appointments are temporary in nature. They are made to fill positions of a project nature that are expected to last more than one year but not to exceed four years. Reasons for making a term appointment include, but are not limited to: project work, extraordinary workload, scheduled position abolishment, reorganization, contracting out of the function, uncertainty of future funding, or similar activities.

Termination of Appointment. Term employees may be terminated at the end of their appointment or must be separated by reduction-in-force procedures for non-cause issues (e.g., budget restraints).

Method of Selection. Term employees are generally selected through open-competition recruitment. They may also be selected on the basis of reinstatement eligibility, veterans' readjustment appointment or other appropriate avenues.

Non-Status Appointment. A term appointment does not confer competitive status. Term employees are NOT eligible for transfer to other agencies. In order to receive a career-conditional appointment, a term employee would have to be competitively selected for such an appointment from another appropriate source (open-competitive examining, VRA, or other special hiring authorities).

Trial Period. The first year of service of a term employee is a trial period. Term employees have the protection in adverse actions (5 USC 4303 and 5 USC 7511) except (a) while serving a trial period and (b) upon expiration of their term appointment.

Benefits. Term employees may be promoted, reassigned, or demoted to other positions within the agency within the confines of their term appointment. Term employees are eligible for within-grade increases, life insurance, and health benefits. Term employees may work on a full-time, part-time or intermittent basis. Full-time and part-time terms earn annual and sick leave and are entitled to holiday pay. They also receive Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) retirement benefits.

Reference CFR 316C, Term Employment

Temporary Appointment!

Short-term Needs. Temporary (temp) appointments are short-term in nature. An agency may make a temp appointment for a specific period not to exceed one year. The appointment may be extended up to a maximum of one additional year (24 months of total service).

Reasons for Appointment. They are made to fill a short-term needs (i.e., two years or less) for reorganization, anticipated reduction in funding, completion of a specific project, peak workload, or similar activities. Temp employees may be terminated at any time for non-cause issues (e.g., budget restraints).

Limitations. Appointment to a successor position is considered to be an extension of the original appointment. Appointment to a position involving the same basic duties and in the same major subdivision of the agency and same local commuting area as the original appointment is also considered to be an extension of the original appointment. An agency may not fill a position by temp appointment if that position has previously been filled by temp appointment(s) for an aggregate of 2 years, or 24 months, within the preceding 3-year period.

Selection. Temp employees are generally selected from a certificate. Temp employees may also be selected on the basis of reinstatement eligibility, veterans' readjustment appointment or other appropriate avenues.

Non-Status Appointment. A temp appointment does not confer competitive status. Temp employees generally must compete for permanent positions.

Benefits. Temp employees may not be promoted, reassigned, or demoted to other positions. General Schedule (GS) temp employees are NOT eligible for within-grade increases, however Federal Wage System (WG) positions are eligible. They are eligible to enroll in the health benefits plans (FEHB) after one year of service. They are covered by Social Security but not the federal retirement system and are not eligible for life insurance (FEGLI). Temp employees may work on a full-time, part-time or intermittent basis. Full-time and part-time temp appointments over 90 days are eligible for annual and sick leave.

Reference: CFR 316D, Temporary Limited Employment

4. WORK SCHEDULES

Full time!

Work Schedules. Coast Guard employees may be covered by the traditional 8 hours a day, 40 hours a week schedules or alternatives like flexible and compressed work schedules. There are also non-traditional work schedules for certain types of employees, i.e., firefighters and search and rescue (SAR) jobs.

Benefits. Full-time employees earn annual and sick leave (if on an appointment expected to last 90 days or more). They are covered by retirement programs based on type of appointment and service. Employees are eligible to elect life and health insurance options based on type of appointment and program options. Temporary wage grade and all permanent employees are eligible to receive within-grade increases. Employees are paid for established Federal holidays.

Part time!

Schedules. Part-time career employment generally means regularly scheduled work of from 16 to 32 hours per week on a regular set schedule. Job sharing is a form of part-time employment in which the tours of duty of two (or more) employees are arranged in such a way as to cover a single full-time position.

Benefits. Part-time employees earn annual and sick leave based on number of hours worked, are eligible for retirement, life insurance, and health benefits unless employment is temporary. They are eligible for within-grade increases in the same manner as full-time employees. Part-time employees are paid for holidays falling on their regularly scheduled workdays.

Intermittent!

No Set Schedule. An intermittent work schedule is appropriate for a position where the work is sporadic and unpredictable so that a tour of duty cannot be regularly scheduled in advance. Intermittent work schedules are less than full time and have no regularly scheduled tour of duty. Intermittent employees serving under career or career-conditional appointment are covered by the Coast Guard merit promotion program and may be reassigned, detailed or promoted in the same manner as full-time and part-time employees.

Benefits. An intermittent employee is not eligible for health or life insurance benefits coverage, unless the intermittent employment followed employment in a position that did afford coverage. An intermittent employee is eligible for retirement coverage based on the type of appointment. Intermittent employees because they have no regularly scheduled tour of duty receive no compensation for a holiday unless actual work is performed on the holiday. Intermittent employees do not earn annual or sick leave.

Seasonal!

Cyclic Work. Seasonal employment allows for the development of an experienced cadre of employees. It covers recurring periods of work typically expected to last at least six months each year. Seasonal employees are employees who periodically are placed in nonduty/nonpay status and recalled to duty in accordance with pre-established conditions of employment.

Agreement. Employees hired under a seasonal tour of duty are required to enter into an agreement with the Coast Guard prior to the employee entering on duty. The agreement informs the employee of:

- Periodic release and recall as a condition of employment.
- The minimum and maximum period the employee can expect to work.
- How release and recall will be effected.
- Benefits employee is entitled while in a nonpay status.

Benefits. Seasonal employees earn leave while in a pay status. For permanent employment, they are entitled to retirement, health and life insurance benefits, and within-grade increases. They are given full credit for their time except for excess time in a nonpay status.

Reference 5CFR 340, For Other Than Full-time Career Employment

5. DIVERSITY AND EEO

SPECIAL INITIATIVES!

Initiatives. Special initiatives impacting the type and method of recruitment utilized, are dynamic and ever changing. Some initiatives are government-wide while others may be DHS or Coast Guard goals. It is critical that management does its part to support all such initiatives.

- **Diversity.** This long-standing government-wide initiative was established to encourage the employment of individuals from diverse cultural, socio-economic, and other group affiliations, including veterans and disabled individuals. Our objectives are to create and maintain an environment where all employees have the opportunity to develop their potential and contribute to mission accomplishment, that supports and encourages the contributions of all employees, where discrimination and harassment have been eliminated, and that is reflective of America.
- **Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO).** This government-wide initiative promotes equal employment opportunity for all individuals. EEO efforts include an array of activities and include two specialized recruitment programs.
 - ◆ **Disabled Veterans Affirmative Action Program (DVAAP).** Established by the Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974, it promotes employment and job advancement opportunities for qualified disabled veterans.
 - ◆ **Federal Equal Opportunity Recruitment Program (FEORP).** Established by the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978, it is an important recruiting initiative designed to eliminate under-representation of minorities and women.

Reference: COMDTINST 12720.4B, Federal Equal Opportunity Recruitment Program (FEORP)

6. PRIORITY PLACEMENT PROGRAMS

Programs. The Coast Guard provides priority placement considerations for surplus and displaced employees. At the present time, there are five programs available. They are:

- Coast Guard Placement Program (CGPP)
- Coast Guard Priority Repromotion Program (PROP)
- DHS Reemployment Priority List (RPL) and Priority Reemployment List (PRL)
- DHS Career Transition Assistance Program (CTAP)
- Interagency Career Transition Assistance Program (ICTAP)

Coast Guard Placement Program (CGPP)!

CGPP. Provides priority placement assistance for registrants within the local commuting area. This program is being sunset for the newer programs described below. Once all current registrants have been placed, the CGPP will no longer exist. Registrants are listed by series and grade and positions are checked against registrants, to give those eligible, appropriate consideration.

Coast Guard Priority Repromotion Program (PROP)!

PROP. Offers priority consideration for Coast Guard employees on grade and pay retention. Employees on grade and pay retention are automatically registered. As vacancies occur, eligible registrants are given appropriate consideration for positions in the local commuting area, if qualified. Repromotion opportunities apply to positions graded above the employee's current grade, up to the grade formerly held.

DHS Reemployment Priority List (RPL) and Priority Reemployment List (PRL)!

RPL/PRL. These programs offer placement opportunities within the Department to DHS employees scheduled for separation or who have been separated due to reduction-in-force or compensable injury. The RPL covers the competitive service while the PRL covers the excepted service registrants. Appropriate consideration is given to program registrants who meet eligibility requirements for registered jobs. Eligibility begins at the time of registration and extends for one to two years depending on tenure.

DHS Career Transition Assistance Program (CTAP)!

CTAP. This is the DHS program for surplus and displaced employees. Current (still on the rolls) career/career-conditional (tenure 1 or 2) competitive service employees of DHS who have received a Reduction-in-Force (RIF) separation notice or a Certificate of Expected Separation within the last year may be entitled to special priority selection under the CTAP program. When Coast Guard fills a position via outside recruitment, and an eligible surplus/displaced DHS employee applies for the vacancy, the agency must select that candidate if determined to be well qualified. To participate in CTAP, an applicant must meet program requirements, any selective factors, and be well qualified (score 80% on ranking factors (veterans' preference points not considered) or meet each quality ranking factor to at least a minimum degree which distinguishes well-qualified candidates from minimally-qualified candidates).

Interagency Career Transition Assistance Program (ICTAP)!

ICTAP. Provides assistance to displaced employees outside DHS. ICTAP requires agencies to select eligible displaced employees from other agencies for vacancies that are filled by outside recruitment. Displaced employees respond to a specific, individual vacancy announcement. In general, individuals must be displaced or meet other eligibility and apply for the position at or below the grade level separated (priority consideration isn't given for positions with greater promotion potential than previously held), be in the same local commuting area, and be well qualified (as defined under CTAP above).

Consideration for Placement. Surplus/displaced employees must be considered before external appointments are made. Therefore, no Outstanding Scholar appointments, reinstatements, transfers, etc., may be made before the vacancy is publicly posted and any eligible ICTAP applicants have been considered. However, an excepted service appointment may be made without first soliciting ICTAP applicants because ICTAP does not apply to the excepted service. Eligible ICTAP candidates may also be hired directly without issuing public notice.

Exceptions to Priority Placements!

Not Subject to Priority Placements. Although priority placement entitlements must be adhered to and can be applicable to both internal and external placements, there are some actions that are not subject to priority placement consideration. While all actions must meet program requirements, some are excluded such as career-ladder promotions, temporary appointments or promotions of 120 days or less, details, job swaps, excepted service appointments (e.g., Student Educational Employment Program, Disabled Program, VRA), conversion from an excepted appointment that offers noncompetitive conversion into the competitive service (e.g., disabled program), position change as a result of reclassification, or placement of supervisors who are poor performers into non-supervisory positions during their supervisory probation.

Reference: COMDTINST M12330.3C, Career Transition and Placement Programs

7. INTERNAL RECRUITMENT OPTIONS

Merit Promotion!

Guidance. The Merit Promotion Program outlines policies and procedures for considering applicants for movement within the Federal government or rehiring reinstatement eligibles through a competitive process. It is the Coast Guard policy that all selections under the merit promotion plan shall be made from among the best-qualified candidates available, based solely on job-related criteria, and be consistent with *merit principles*. The Commandant Instruction on *Merit Promotion Program and National Merit Promotion Plan (COMDTINST 12335.4)* establishes policy for merit promotion.

Status and VEOA Eligible to Apply. Because our jobs are in the competitive service, employees must be current or former career or career-conditional employees with reinstatement eligibility to be considered in the merit promotion process, unless, they are covered by the Veterans Employment Opportunity Act (VEOA). Refer to the Veterans' Programs section for eligibility requirements. VEOA eligibles compete in the same manner and with other Federal employees, although they are given career-conditional appointments.

Other Consideration. Often the merit promotion announcement also includes other recruitment options, such as consideration of VRA and Handicapped eligibles. The open competitive process can be announced simultaneously to consider the general public. On vacancy announcements, "area of consideration" outlines who can apply. For merit promotion, all candidates are reviewed for basic eligibility. Those who meet the basic eligibility are rated and ranked and the best qualified are certified to the selection official.

Noncompetitive Options!

Types. There are noncompetitive options that may be considered in filling positions including, reassignment, change to lower grade, accretion of duties, promotions when previous competition provided career growth (career ladder), transfers, reinstatements, etc. Moving employees to different jobs may require clearing the appropriate priority placement lists. Some movements require that the vacancy be announced to accept applications from CTAP or ICTAP candidates prior to taking a different noncompetitive action. Options should be discussed with the HR Specialist to ensure they can be done noncompetitively.

Reference: COMDTINST 12335.4, Merit Promotion Program & National Merit Promotion Plan

8. EXTERNAL RECRUITMENT OPTIONS

Competitive vs. Excepted Service!

Competitive Service - Selecting officials may fill positions externally mainly by appointing persons under excepted service or under competitive service authorities. Among the recruitment sources that are generally utilized by Coast Guard for competitive appointments are:

- Open Competitive (career or career-conditional appointments)
- Outstanding Scholars (usually considered in conjunction with other competitive recruitment)
- Reinstatements (generally considered through merit promotion)
- Transfers (generally considered through merit promotion procedures)

The priority placement provisions affect any external competitive appointment. Before making any competitive service appointments, requirements for public notice and priority placement considerations must be satisfied (candidates found to be eligible and well qualified for the vacancy, **MUST** be selected before any other competitive candidate).

Excepted Service - Among the staffing programs in the excepted service which Coast Guard generally utilizes for recruitment are:

- Veteran's Readjustment Authority (VRA)
- Schedule A (handicapped)
- Student Education Employment programs
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Appointments may be made in the excepted service without following priority placement provisions.

Open-Competitive Examining (career or career-conditional)!

DOT's Delegated Agreement. The Treasury Appropriations Bill, signed into law on November 19, 1995, gave OPM the authority to delegate competitive examining to all agencies effective January 1, 1996. DHS has been delegated this authority. Most of our vacancies are announced through our automated referral system (ADS by AVUE) but there are a few that we send to OPM to do the recruiting for us. Either way, the selecting official receives a certificate and the rules for selection are the same.

Process. Open-competitive examining is the process used to fill civilian positions with candidates typically applying from outside the Federal workforce. It can also be used to enable employees who do not have civil service status to compete for a permanent appointment and to enable employees with status to compete for other jobs. Employees with status are more likely to apply through merit promotion procedures rather than open-competitive examining. Vacancies are open to all segments of society and selection is based on competencies or knowledge, skills, and abilities, and veterans' preference, after fair and open competition.

Work the Cert. Unlike merit promotion, the competitive examining process requires the application of veterans' preference, the rule of three or category ranking, pass-over and objection

procedures, and full public notice. Under rule of three procedures, applicants with veterans' preference are certified ahead of others with the same score. Preference eligibles who have a compensable service-connected disability usually go to the top of the certificate. When a certificate is issued, the names of a sufficient number of eligibles are provided to allow the selecting official to consider three eligibles for each vacancy. The selecting official selects from the highest three eligibles on the certificate who are available for appointment. Under category ranking, the applicants are grouped based on their knowledge, skills and abilities and are certified to the selecting official by group. Selections are by grouping and veterans are considered ahead of non-veterans within a group. A selecting official may not pass over a preference eligible to select a non-preference eligible unless an objection to the preference eligible is sustained. Any deviations from the normal order of selection must be approved. Each vacancy announcement is open to all applicants and is posted on the [USAJobs](#) page. Applicants selected for these positions are given career or career-conditional appointments.

Reference: 5 CFR Part 315, Career and Career-conditional Employment, and 5 CFR Part 332, Subpart D, Consideration for Appointment

Positions Covered Under the Luevano Consent Decree Formerly called Administrative Careers with America (ACWA)!

Coverage. Effective November 19, 1994, ACWA was abolished and OPM stopped testing or keeping registers for ACWA positions. Due to ongoing Luevano court cases, however, a replacement test has yet to be created. Most administrative jobs in two-grade intervals, being filled at the GS-5 or GS-7 level, with potential to at least the GS-9 level are covered by the Decree. This process is applicable to open-competitive appointments (not merit promotion).

Rating Procedure. The Luevano consent decree required the establishment and application of an approved rating procedure for entry into these positions. OPM has delegated the authority to agencies to administer an approved examining instrument on a case-by-case basis. We usually use OPM to advertise these types of positions.

Reference: Luevano consent decree November 19, 1981

Outstanding Scholar!

Outstanding Scholar Option. As a result of the Luevano decree, the Outstanding Scholar program was created as an additional source for filling two-grade interval, entry-level jobs. Therefore, positions formerly covered by ACWA can be recruited through outstanding scholar procedures when considering recruitment sources for positions that are being recruited at the trainee level (GS-5/7) in addition to internal sources.

Purpose. The Outstanding Scholar program allows agencies to non-competitively hire individuals who meet certain academic criteria for positions covered by the Luevano Consent Decree (two-grade interval administrative positions). Supervisors can contact the HR Specialist

to determine if a position is covered. The Program was established to address under-representation of African Americans and Hispanics, although it is not restricted to those designated minority groups. This program is used as a supplement to competitive examining.

First Priority. Prior to making appointments under the program, the position should be advertised, including posting to USAJobs (the OPM job information system). Prior to selecting an individual for an outstanding scholar appointment, all well-qualified CTAP/ICTAP candidates will be given priority consideration. However, the "rule of three" and veterans' preference are not applied to Outstanding Scholar candidates.

Criteria. Individuals may be hired directly into these positions at the GS-5 or GS-7 with potential to at least the GS-9 level if they meet the following criteria:

- Have received a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university;
- Have a grade point average of 3.45 (out of 4.0) or higher in all undergraduate course work - OR - be in the top 10% of their college or university graduating class or major subdivision (not in their major or department);
- Meet qualifications for the position.

Reference: Luevano consent decree November 19, 1981

Critical-Need Appointments!

Coverage. In rare instances, a critical-need appointment may be used for either short-term requirements or for continuing positions that must be filled on an interim basis pending other procedures. These are 30-day appointments in the excepted service with one 30-day extension allowed for a total of 60 days maximum. The appointment may not be used to extend the service limit of another appointing authority. No employee can serve in this type of appointment for more than 60 days in any 12-month period.

Reference: 5 CFR 213.3101(i)(2), Excepted Schedules

9. VETERANS' PROGRAMS

Veterans' Employment Act (VEOA)!

The Amended Law. On November 30, 1999 the President signed into law the Veterans Millennium Health Care and Benefits Act (Public Law 106-117). Section 511 of this law amends the Veterans Employment Opportunities Act of 1998 (VEOA). The 1998 law provided a new appointment vehicle for veterans allowing them to compete through merit promotion.

Area of Consideration. For any job postings (i.e., vacancy announcements) that an agency has open to outside candidates, the agency must accept applications from veterans under this law. The law allows eligible veterans to compete with status candidates. When opening a vacancy

announcement only to DHS employees, these veterans would not be eligible to apply.

Eligibility. Preference eligibles OR veterans who have been separated under honorable conditions from the armed forces with substantially three or more years of continuous active service are considered VEOA candidates and can compete under merit promotion procedures.

How VEOAs Are Considered. Eligible veterans compete along with other Federal employees. The VEOA candidates are considered in the same way as other merit promotion candidates e.g., meet basic eligibility, rated and ranked and if among best qualified certified to the selecting official for consideration. No extra points are assigned for veterans' preference. Those selected are given career-conditional appointments.

Redress. The new law created a redress process that allows a preference eligible who believes that an agency has violated his or her rights under any law or regulation related to veterans' preference to file a formal complaint with the Department of Labor. The new law also makes failure to comply with veterans' preference requirements a *prohibited personnel practice* under title 5 United States Code.

Reference: CFR 335.106, Special Selection Procedures for Certain Veterans in Merit Promotion

Veterans' Program for 30%+ Disabled!

Discretionary Authority. Veterans with a 30% or more disability may be given noncompetitive appointments under this program. This authority is discretionary.

Eligibility. To be eligible the veteran must be a disabled veteran who has a compensable service-connected disability of 30 percent or more and the disability must be officially documented by the Department of Defense or Veterans Affairs. The veteran must provide a copy of the letter officially documenting the disability dated within the last 12 months certifying receipt of compensation for a service-connected disability.

Types of Appointments. They can be at any grade level or occupation. Under these appointments, veterans serve initially under a temporary or term appointment not limited to 60 days or less. The employee can be converted to a career or career-conditional appointment at any time during the temporary or term appointment.

References: 5 CFR 316.402, Procedures for Making Temp Appts, and 315.707, Disabled Vets

Veterans' Readjustment Act (VRA)!

VRA Appointment. The Veterans Readjustment Act (VRA) allows veterans who meet eligibility to be hired directly into the excepted service without participating in an open-competitive examining procedure. VRA provides a method of hiring certain veterans quickly

because CTAP/ICTAP applicants need not be solicited prior to a VRA appointment. VRA candidates are typically considered under merit promotion vacancy announcements accepting applications from outside the Coast Guard but can be considered noncompetitively. While VRA candidates may apply under open vacancy announcements, they can also be solicited or unsolicited from other sources. Contacts to local state employment offices and veteran's offices may provide a source of quality VRA candidates.

Consideration of Applicants. When more than one VRA candidate is being considered for the same job and one or more is a preference eligible, veterans' preference procedures must be applied. A veteran who is eligible for a VRA appointment is not automatically entitled to veterans' preference.

Type of Appointment. Although a VRA can be appointed to a temporary position, they are typically appointed to the excepted service in a permanent position with conversion provisions. After two years of satisfactory performance, they are converted to competitive career or career-conditional appointments. VRA candidates may be appointed up to and including the GS-11 level, as long as qualification requirements are met. A VRA training plan is required.

References: 5 CFR 307, VRA, and 5 CFR 315.705 Employees Serving Under VRA

10. HIRING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

People With Disabilities!

Support for People with Disabilities. Managers and supervisors are responsible for the employment and advancement of people with disabilities. This includes recruiting and hiring and supporting these individuals and considering reasonable accommodations when requested. All vacancy announcements state that reasonable accommodations will be made for qualified applicants with disabilities.

Guide Available. OPM has developed an excellent employment guide to explain issues and programs aimed at improving the employment of people with disabilities. [*OPM's Employment Guide for People with Disabilities in the Federal Government*](#), provides guidance, information, and references to aid in efforts to hire and advance employees with disabilities.

Schedule A (Handicapped)!

Physical Disability. Schedule A appointments allow qualified persons with disabilities to be hired directly into the excepted service without participating in a competitive examination, or without any prior Federal civilian service. Schedule A appointments provide a quick method of hiring individuals with disabilities because CTAP/ICTAP applicants need not be solicited prior to hiring through Schedule A.

Eligibility. Persons with disabilities who are eligible for appointment receive excepted appointments. After two years of service, the individual is eligible for non-competitive conversion to a competitive appointment. Schedule A (handicapped) candidates may be appointed at any grade level, as long as qualification requirements are met.

Certified Candidates. Certification for a Schedule A appointment is determined by a State Vocational Rehabilitation Agency or Veterans Administration. A specialist with either of these agencies evaluates the job site and the nature and severity of the handicapping condition. Supervisors may contact the HR Specialist for assistance or solicit Schedule A candidates directly. However, candidates must be certified by an appropriate agency representative and reviewed by the HR specialist for eligibility before appointment.

References: 5 CFR 213.3102(u), Excepted Schedules, & 315.709, Disabled Schedule A

Schedule B (Handicapped)!

Mentally Restored. Schedule B Handicapped Appointments are similar to Schedule A appointments except that the individuals do not have physical disabilities, but instead have been mentally restored.

References: 5 CFR 213.3102(t), Excepted Schedules, & 315.709, Disabled Schedule A

11. CIVILIAN CAREER ENTRY-LEVEL OPPORTUNITY (CEO) PROGRAM

The CEO Program!

Centrally Funded Billets. The Coast Guard [Civilian Career Entry-Level Opportunity \(CEO\) Program](#) is designed to create a pipeline of employees entering the workforce at the entry level to fill current and future needs. It provides a means to address Coast Guard under representation based on civilian labor statistics and to meet the needs for future well-qualified employees to carry out our mission. This program provides an incentive to managers to take advantage of the developmental programs available. This program provides centrally funded billets based on availability and the needs of the sponsoring program manager. Participants hired under the CEO program are not counted against the organization's billet ceiling. Once the developmental program is completed (typically from six months to two years), employees are moved into the organization's permanent billet ceiling. Career-development programs can be funded through the CEO program.

Reference: CEO Program Memorandum of October 15, 2001

12. CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

Student Employment Programs (SEEP)!

The SEEP Program. OPM revised its regulations and consolidated existing Federal student employment programs into a one Student Educational Employment Program (SEEP). This program greatly simplifies student employment, replacing 13 appointing authorities with two. In addition, agencies have increased flexibility in selection criteria and overall program design. The two components of SEEP are the Student Career Experience Program (SCEP) and the Student Temporary Experience Program (STEP). Most student appointments are made in the excepted service, and therefore solicitation of ICTAP applicants is not required. The exception to this is summer employment.

SCEP. Assignments must be related to the student's academic program and career goals. These appointments also have the potential for noncompetitive conversion to a career appointment. Some of the former student programs now combined under SCEP are the Co-op (high school, associate, bachelors, graduate degrees), Federal Junior Fellowship, and Harry S. Truman Foundation Scholarship Program.

STEP. This component allows students flexible, temporary employment to enable them to earn a salary while continuing their studies. Their work assignments do not have to be related to their studies. Among the former temporary programs now included under STEP are stay-in-school (SIS), summer aid, legal interns, summer employment, graduate students in scientific, professional, or analytical positions, and students in scientific, professional, or technical positions, GS-9 and below.

Reference: 5 CFR 213.3202 Excepted Schedules, and Executive Order 12015

Presidential Management Intern Program (PMI)!

Assignments. In 1977 by Executive Order, the program was designed to attract to the federal service outstanding graduate students (master's and doctoral-level) for a variety of disciplines in support of public service programs. Work assignment may involve domestic or international issues, technological changes, criminal justice, health research, financial management, and many other fields in support of the public service.

Nomination Process. The appropriate dean, director or chairperson of the graduate academic program nominates the students. The students participate in a competitive nomination process devised by their educational institution to ensure fair and open competition among all interested and eligible students. Intake for these positions begins in September of each year. Then in the spring, referrals are made to those agencies requesting PMI candidates.

Appointments. PMIs receive an initial two-year appointment. After successfully completing the program, PMIs may be eligible for conversion to a permanent government

position.

Reference: Executive Order 12364

Upward Mobility Program!

The [Upward Mobility Program](#) is designed to provide opportunities to current workforce employees who have demonstrated potential but lack the formal qualifications for entry-level professional, technical and administrative positions leading to higher grades. Participants in the program are placed on a training plan and given formal classroom training, rotational or other job assignments, interagency assignments, etc to develop their talents. Upon completion of the training program, participants are eligible for further progression within their career field. Positions with full performance level of grades GS-9 and above and WG-8 and above may be filled under the Upward Mobility Program.

Reference: COMDTINST 12713.12, Coast Guard Upward Mobility Program

Student Work Study Program!

Contracting Option. This program is not a civilian hire program, but rather one funded and coordinated through the procurement process. The Federal government (through DOE) subsidizes the program and helps students (who need financial assistance) gain on-the-job experience. The program is structured so that the university pays the student directly from a set pay scale. The university in turn bills the agency at approximately 40% of the cost. To get established with this program, the first step is for the office wishing to hire the student to contact a local university that has students enrolled in the type of curriculum they are interested in. Most universities handle this through their Student Employment Office. If the university participates in the program, they will normally have established contract provisions and can fax or mail them to the interested office. The office will then send a Procurement Request through their Contracting Office to set up a Blanket Purchase Agreement (BPA) with the university. Once established, the mechanics of the program are worked out between the university and the office through the contract. Normally the office sends payroll forms in weekly or biweekly showing the hours worked, with a copy to the Contracting Office. The university then bills the Finance Center for the number of hours and agreed upon price.

For More Information. District 8 Legal Office uses this program to employ law students through Tulane Law School. GSA in the New Orleans area also uses the program to hire architectural students from Tulane's Architectural School. POC for Tulane at the Student employment office is Sherry Riedlinger at 504-865-5368.

13. VOLUNTEER SERVICES

Generally, Federal agencies are prohibited from accepting volunteer services. However, there

are special provisions for exceptions to this prohibition. Two such exceptions are described below.

Volunteer Service For the Armed Forces!

The Coast Guard, as part of the Armed Forces, may accept volunteer services supporting:

- medical, dental, nursing, or other health-care related services.
- services to be provided for a museum or a natural resources program.
- services to be provided for support programs to members of the armed forces and the families of such members, including the following programs:
 - ◆ Family support programs
 - ◆ Child development and youth services programs
 - ◆ Library and education programs
 - ◆ Religious programs
 - ◆ Housing referral programs
 - ◆ Programs providing employment assistance to spouses of such members
 - ◆ Morale, welfare, and recreation programs, to the extent not covered by another subparagraph of this paragraph.

Status of Volunteer. - The volunteer must have appropriate credentials to do the job; be given written notification of scope of services; and be supervised the same as a compensated employee. Volunteers will not be placed in policy-making positions or, in general, be compensated for their services. Volunteers are typically only considered to be an employee of the Federal Government for purposes of:

- ◆ compensation for work-related injuries
- ◆ claims for damages or loss
- ◆ maintenance of records on individuals
- ◆ conflicts of interest

Reference: 10 United States Code, Armed Forces, Chapter 81 Civilian Employees.

Student Volunteer Program!

Authorized. The Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 and Public Law 95-454, authorized Federal agencies to establish programs designed to provide educationally related work assignments for students in non-pay status. Students enrolled at least half time in high school, trade school, technical or vocational institute, junior college, college, university or other accredited educational institution, are eligible to participate. Volunteer service is limited to service performed by a student, with the permission of the institution where the student is enrolled, as part of an agency program established for the purpose of providing educational experience for the student.

Coverage. Students participating under this volunteer program are not considered Federal employees for any purpose other than injury compensation or laws related to the Tort Claims Act. Service is not creditable for leave accrual or any other employee benefit. This service will not be used to displace any employee or to staff a position that is a normal part of the workforce.

Reference: 5 CFR 308, Volunteer Service

14. PROCEDURES FOR SES AND ATTORNEY JOBS

Senior Executive Service (SES)!

Filling Top Level Jobs. The SES is a corps of persons who administer public programs at the top levels of the Federal Government. The SES is a gradeless system where salary is linked to performance, not position. There are two types of qualifications for an SES position: (1) executive qualifications common to all SES positions and (2) specific, professional/technical qualifications for the position being advertised. The Coast Guard determines the qualifications required for its SES positions and whether to consider only current Federal employees or all qualified candidates. Jobs are announced; applications are reviewed, rated and ranked, and once a selection is made, forwarded via DHS to OPM for a review and decision.

Reference: 5CFR 317, Employment in the SES

Attorneys!

Attorney Positions. Attorneys are hired in the Federal Government under Schedule A appointments in the excepted service. There are specific procedures for recruitment of attorney positions for the Coast Guard. Typically, the hiring office in conjunction with the personnel office handles vacancies. They are announced (in a modified format different than most other vacancy announcements) and posted on the CG civilian jobs website, USAJobs, and to Federal Reports, Inc posted on the internet) to ensure reaching a broad applicant pool. The HR Specialist can provide specific guidance on the procedures to use in filling these positions.

Reference: 5 CFR 213.3101(d), Excepted Schedules

15. INITIATING RECRUITMENT PROCESS

Get Ready, Get Set, Fill!

What Happens. Early in the process, the supervisor plans for the recruitment effort, decides how to fill the positions, and initiates actions to fill the vacancy. The typical process involved for initiating the process and making a selection includes:

- **Initiate Request to Recruit.** Supervisor fills out request for recruit (SF-52) - starts

the process.

- **Provide Appropriate Documentation.** Supervisor provides information identified in the *Guide for Preparation of Civilian Recruit Actions* - Includes the position description, length of time to open the vacancy, area of consideration, method of advertisement, selective factors if needed, KSAs, conditions of employment, special considerations for unusual work shifts, certifications required, security clearance requirements, payment of travel costs, and any other pertinent information to be used in the hiring process. The HR Specialist is available to provide assistance as needed.
- **Approve Action.** The SF52 is approved to show agreement with the proposed action and that all other necessary approvals have been obtained (funding, ATU coordination, etc.)
- **Submit to Personnel.** Personnel works with supervisors to ensure KSAs and vacancy announcement reflect the requirements for the position.
- **Internal Priority Placement Considered.** If documentation is OK, personnel clears internal priority placement programs prior to announcing the vacancy and develops the vacancy announcement.
- **Vacancy Announced.** The length of time the vacancy is announced should be long enough to get good candidates, but short enough not to hold up the process generally two weeks unless a shorter time is sufficient to provide an ample applicant pool, or more time is needed for difficult-to-fill positions.
- **Basic Eligibility.** Personnel reviews applications for eligibility and checks for CTAP/ICTAP eligibles - All applicants are reviewed to determine that they meet basic eligibility. All priority placement eligibles are reviewed and considered in accordance with the appropriate priority placement requirements.
- **Candidates are Rated & Ranked.** All eligible candidates are rated using job-related criteria. The rating is usually done through an automated system.
- **Certificate Issued to Selecting Official** - The selecting official, using job-related criteria decides the “best” candidate for the job.
- **Interviews, Reference Checks, Selections Made.** Interviews and reference checks are encouraged so that the maximum information is available to select the best person for the job.
- **Certificate with Selection Sent to Personnel.** The certificate must be annotated with the selection and signed by the selecting official.
- **Tentative Job Offer.** Personnel checks for all appropriate clearances and requirements and makes tentative job offer.
- **Record Checks.** Personnel coordinates requests for security clearances, arranges physicals, drug testing screening, requests employment information if selectee has prior Federal service, checks for suitability, etc when necessary prior to finalizing job offer.
- **Final Offer, Position Filled.** A Human Resources representative makes the final job offer and sets the effective date. This finalizes the process and lets the employee know when to report for work.

There is much to consider in filling a job. The information provided in the

recruitment guide can assist in understanding the many options available and the decisions that need to be made. Human Resources is available to answer questions and provide assistance regarding the recruitment process.