



# FEMA Hiring

## Hiring Authorities & Recruitment Flexibilities



FEMA



### Hiring Authorities

FEMA may use a variety of appointing authorities to hire job applicants. This fact sheet covers the types of appointments available, including special hiring flexibilities that may allow hiring managers to fill critical positions quicker.

### Noncompetitive Authorities

*Fill a Vacant Position Faster*

Noncompetitive hiring authorities are established by law or Executive Order (EO) and may allow for the quick appointment of qualified candidates while still adhering to the Merit System Principles. Noncompetitive hiring can help fill your vacant positions quicker. For more information on the use of noncompetitive hiring authorities, contact your servicing OCCHCO Human Resources Specialist to determine if this is the right approach for your position.

### What are Some Commonly Used Noncompetitive Authorities?

[Click the hyperlinks below to learn more.](#)

#### Veterans' Recruitment Authority (VRA)

Enables agencies to appoint an eligible veteran without competition, up to the GS-11 level or equivalent. These positions are typically not required to be posted on USAJobs.gov.

**Candidate profile:** A veteran of the Armed Forces who:

- Has received a campaign badge for service during a war or in a campaign or expedition; **OR**,
- Is a disabled veteran; **OR**,
- Has received an Armed Forces Service Medal for participation in a military operation; **AND**,
- Is a recently separated veteran (within the last 3-years) and separated under honorable conditions (i.e., honorable or general discharge).

#### 30% or More Disabled Veterans

Enables agencies to appoint eligible veterans to any position for which he or she is qualified. This authority can be used to make temporary (at least 60-days but not to exceed 1-year) or term (more than 1-year, but not more than 4-years) appointments in the competitive service. Individuals can be noncompetitively converted to a permanent status at any time.

**Candidate profile:** A veteran of the Armed Forces who:

- Retired from active military service with a service-connected disability rating of 30% or more; **OR**,
- Has a rating by the Department of Veterans Affairs showing a compensable service-connected disability of 30% or more.

#### Peace Corps Volunteers

Enables agencies to noncompetitively appoint eligible Peace Corps volunteers who have completed certain time requirements.

**Candidate profile:** A Peace Corps volunteer who generally has:

- Served a total of two consecutive years in the Peace Corps; **AND**,
- Served within the last year.

#### Peace Corps Federal Staff

Enables agencies to noncompetitively appoint eligible Peace Corps federal staff who have completed certain time requirements.

**Candidate profile:** A Peace Corps staff member who generally has:

- Completed no less than 36-months of continuous service with the Peace Corps; **AND**,
- Served within the last 3-years.



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### AmeriCorps Vista Volunteers

Enables agencies to noncompetitively appoint eligible AmeriCorps Vista volunteers who have served a total of one year with AmeriCorps Vista within the last year.

**Candidate profile:** An AmeriCorps Vista volunteer who generally has:

- Served a total of 1-year with AmeriCorps Vista; **AND**,
- Served within the last year.

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### Military Spouses

Enables agencies to noncompetitively appoint eligible military spouses to a competitive service position for which he or she is otherwise qualified.

**Candidate profile:** A military spouse who is:

- The spouse of a member of the Armed Forces on activity duty; **OR**,
- The spouse of a 100 percent disabled member of the Armed Forces; **OR**,
- The spouse of a deceased member of the Armed Forces.

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### Reassignment

Allows for the change of a current employee, while serving continuously within the same agency, to move from one position to another at the equivalent grade level (without promotion or demotion).

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### Reinstatement

Allows prior competitive service employees to reenter the competitive service at the equivalent grade level or lower previously held.

If the individual is seeking a higher grade or a position with more promotion potential than previously held, generally he or she must apply under a merit promotion announcement and rank among the best-qualified applicants to be selected.

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### Individuals with Disabilities (Schedule A)

Enables agencies to appoint qualifying individuals with a severe intellectual, physical, or psychiatric disability. Appointments may be on a permanent, time-limited, or temporary basis. Individuals hired to non-temporary appointments under this authority may be noncompetitively converted to the competitive service after 2-years of satisfactory service.

**Candidate profile:** An individual who:

- Has “proof of disability” documentation.

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### Interchange Agreements

Provides current federal employees in the excepted service the opportunity to apply to positions at another agency in the competitive service, presuming the agencies have an interchange agreement in place.

**For example:** An excepted service employee from the Defense Intelligence Agency may apply to a FEMA competitive service position based on the DCIPS interchange agreement.

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### Transfer

Allows a current competitive service employee to transfer, without a break in service, to a competitive service position at the equivalent grade level or lower than previously held in another agency.

If the individual is seeking a higher grade or a position with more promotion potential than previously held, generally he or she must apply under a merit promotion announcement and rank among the best-qualified applicants to be selected.

## Recruiting Students?

Schedule D: Pathways Interns, Recent Graduates, and Presidential Management Fellows (PMF)

### [Pathways Internships](#)

Pathways Programs offer clear paths to Federal internships for students from high school through post-graduate school. These positions offer career development opportunities for individuals who are at the beginning of their Federal service.

Agencies may appoint an Intern for an initial period expected to last more than 1-year; however, the end date is generally the Intern's projected graduation date, plus 120-days.

Veterans' Preference applies and positions must be advertised on USAJobs.gov.

### [Pathways Recent Graduates Program](#)

This program is for individuals who have recently graduated from qualifying educational institutions or programs and seek a dynamic, career development program with training and mentorship. To be eligible, applicants must apply within two years of degree or certificate completion (except for veterans precluded from doing so due to a military service obligation, who will then have up to six years to apply).

Appointments to the program are typically 1-year but may be for a period of up to 2-years. Recent graduates may be converted to a permanent position if they successfully complete at least 1-year of continuous service, demonstrate successful job performance, and meet the qualifications for the position.

Veteran's Preference applies and positions must be advertised on USAJobs.gov.

### [Presidential Management Fellows](#)

The PMF Program, administered by OPM, is the Federal Government's leadership program for individuals who have received a qualifying advanced degree within the last 2-years. Agencies compete for PMFs and must pay a fee if successful in recruitment. Veteran's preference applies.

For More Information: [OCCHCO Talent Acquisition](#), [Pathways Internships](#), [Presidential Management Fellows Program](#)

## Other Hiring Authorities & Flexibilities

**[Reemployment of Civilian Retirees](#)** Commonly known as reemployed annuitants. Federal agencies may reemploy Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) and Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) annuitants. A reemployed annuitant may be eligible to receive both their retirement annuity and a federal salary for a limited time with the approval of a dual compensation waiver. Reemployment of annuitants allows agencies to leverage the expertise of former Federal employees to support mission critical activities.

For More Information: [Dual Compensation Waiver Fact Sheet](#)

### **[Direct Hire Authority \(DHA\)](#)**

An appointing authority that the Office of Personnel Management can give to Federal agencies for filling vacancies when a critical hiring need or severe shortage of candidates exists. DHA helps expedite hiring by removing competitive rating and ranking and veteran's preference. Direct Hire Authority covers numerous positions in FEMA including GS-1102 Acquisition, GS-2210 IT Specialist (Cyber), GS-1301 Physical Scientist, GS-1306 Health Scientist, GS-1510 Actuary, GS-1530 Statistics, GS-0810 General Engineer, GS-0810 Civil Engineer, and GS-0401 Biologist. A full list of currently approved positions may be found [here](#).

For More Information: [Direct Hire Authority Fact Sheet](#)

## [Disaster Recovery Reform Act \(DRRA\) of 2018](#)

The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Stafford Act) authorizes the Administrator “to appoint temporary personnel, after serving continuously for 3-years, to positions in the FEMA in the same manner that competitive service employees with competitive status are considered for transfers, reassignments, or promotions. Specifically, DRRA eligibles may apply to FEMA Merit promotion vacancies and be considered for FEMA opportunities.

## Coronavirus Disease 19 (COVID-19) Hiring Flexibilities

### [COVID-19 Excepted Service Hiring Authority \(Schedule A\)](#)

The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) is authorizing excepted service appointments, under Schedule A, to address the need for hiring additional staff in response to COVID-19.

These positions may be filled on a temporary basis for up to 1-year and may be extended for no more than one additional year. These appointments are limited to individuals needed in direct response to the effects of COVID-19. Individuals may be appointed at any grade level.

### [OPM COVID-19 Response Program \(aka OPM’s Open Opportunities\): Temporary Rotational Assignments & Details](#)

The COVID-19 Response Community allows Federal agencies to post details, microdetails and temporary rotational assignments so that current federal employees, with applicable skills, can assist with the Federal response to COVID-19. These details or temporary rotational assignments are non-reimbursable and may last up to 1-year.

The COVID-19 Response Program will use [Open Opportunities](#), a governmentwide platform offering professional development opportunities.

## Stafford Act Hiring Flexibility

[Section 306 of the Stafford Act](#) provides FEMA with authority to hire employees without regard to provisions of Title 5, United States Code and its implementing regulations. Positions include COREs, Reservists and Local Hire.

Positions hired using the Stafford Act authority are temporary personnel who are hired to support FEMA’s disaster response and recovery efforts. As temporary employees, Stafford Act employees cannot replace the work performed and funded through annual appropriations by permanent full-time staff.

To hire qualified candidates, FEMA posts vacancy announcements through USA Jobs and/or utilizes the name request process. Individuals, who accept Stafford positions, are given excepted service appointments under the Stafford Act with a minimum of 2-year appointments, which can be renewed. As noted above, once DRRA continuous service requirements are met, COREs are eligible to compete for Title 5 positions at FEMA.

Reservists are also hired to two-year appointments, which can be renewed.

Local Hire positions are appointed for an initial 120-days and can be renewed up to 1-year.

## [How Can I Find Out More Information?](#)

Please contact your servicing OCCHCO Human Resources Specialist if you have questions or would like additional information on how best to leverage these hiring options.