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# Veterans' Preference and Military Spouse Hiring Authorities and Other Flexibilities Resource Guide



VA



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs  
Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer

## Veterans' Preference and Military Spouse Hiring Authorities and Other Flexibilities Resource Guide

Hiring authorities, Veterans' preference, and other flexibilities are regulatory requirements under which certain individuals are eligible to be employed in the Federal government. The intent of this Guide is to serve as a resource for general information on special hiring authorities and to assist in understanding various flexibilities available for filling vacant positions. Please work with your servicing Human Resources practitioner. For additional information on hiring authorities, Veterans' preference, and other flexibilities, please visit the Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) Hiring Information webpage at <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/hiring-information/hiring-authorities/>

**30% or More Disabled Veteran** - This authority allows for the non-competitive appointment of any Veteran with a 30% or more service-connected disability. VA Human Resources practitioners may use this authority to make temporary (at least 60 days but not to exceed 1 year) or term (more than 1 year, but not to exceed 4 years) appointments in the competitive service. There is no grade level restriction. There is no requirement that the Veteran be converted to a permanent position, but an agency/department has the authority to convert such a position to a permanent position if it chooses to do so.

- PUBLIC NOTICE REQUIRED: NO
- CTAP/ICTAP REQUIRED: NO
- PROBATIONARY/TRIAL PERIOD: YES. However, the time spent under a permanent or term appointment counts towards the one-year completion or satisfies the requirement.
- VETERANS' PREFERENCE: **YES**

**Military Spouse Non-competitive Appointing Authority (Title 5 CFR Section 315)** - This authority allows appointment of certain military spouses without using traditional competitive examining procedures. VA Human Resources practitioners may use this authority when filling competitive service positions on a temporary (not to exceed 1 year), term (more than 1 year but not more than 4 years), or permanent basis. There is no grade level limitation. This authority does not entitle spouses to preference, it merely provides an eligibility for appointment on internal (merit) vacancies Federal Government wide.



- PUBLIC NOTICE REQUIRED: YES
- CTAP/ICTAP REQUIRED: YES
- PROBATIONARY/TRIAL PERIOD: YES. However, the completion of serving a one-year probationary period under the military spouse appointment satisfies the requirement.
- VETERANS' PREFERENCE: **NO**

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☐ **Veterans Employment Opportunities Act of 1998 (VEOA)** - This authority allows eligible Veterans to apply for positions announced under merit promotion procedures when an agency/department is recruiting outside of its own workforce. It allows eligible Veterans and preference eligibles to apply to announcements that would otherwise be limited to status candidates (current competitive service employees and certain prior employees

who have earned competitive status). Eligible Veterans must meet the minimum qualifications for the position advertised and the position to which being appointed.

- PUBLIC NOTICE REQUIRED: YES
- CTAP/ICTAP REQUIRED: NO
- PROBATIONARY/TRIAL PERIOD: YES
- VETERANS' PREFERENCE: **NO**

☐ **Veterans Recruitment Appointment (VRA)** - This authority allows agencies/departments to appoint eligible Veterans without competition to positions at any grade level up to and including the GS-11 or equivalent. There is no limitation to the number of times a Veteran can apply under VRA. Such individuals may qualify for conversion to permanent status after two years of satisfactory service.

- PUBLIC NOTICE REQUIRED: NO
- CTAP/ICTAP REQUIRED: NO
- PROBATIONARY/TRIAL PERIOD: Yes. However, the completion of serving a one-year trail period under the expected appointment satisfies the requirement.
- VETERANS' PREFERENCE: **YES**

☐ **Schedule A Appointing Authority** - This authority allows VA to hire eligible persons, including Veterans with severe physical, psychiatric, or intellectual disabilities without competition. Such individuals may qualify for conversion to permanent status after two years of satisfactory service.

- PUBLIC NOTICE REQUIRED: NO
- CTAP/ICTAP REQUIRED: NO
- PROBATIONARY/TRIAL PERIOD: YES. However, the completion of serving under the two-year excepted appointment satisfies the requirement.
- VETERANS' PREFERENCE: **YES**
- **Note:** If 1 or more Schedule A candidates competing for the same job is a preference eligible, then Veterans' preference applies as administratively feasible.



## Veterans' Preference and Military Spouse Hiring Authorities and Other Flexibilities Resource Guide

☐ **Workforce Recruitment Program (WRP)** – WRP is a recruitment and referral program that helps Federal employers identify qualified college students, graduate students, recent graduates, and Veterans with disabilities throughout the United States. The Department can employ summer interns through the WRP and use WRP as a resource of candidates for both temporary and permanent positions.

For additional information please visit: <https://www.va.gov/employee/programs/wrp.asp>

- PUBLIC NOTICE REQUIRED: NO
- CTAP/ICTAP REQUIRED: NO
- PROBATIONARY/TRIAL PERIOD: Yes, if it is the initial appointment or the individual has not satisfied the requirement.
- VETERANS' PREFERENCE: **YES** **Note:** If 1 or more WRP candidates competing for the same job is a preference eligible, then Veterans' preference applies as administratively feasible.

☐ **Pathways Program** - This authority offers a clear path to Federal internships for students from high school through post-graduate school and Federal careers for recent graduates. Pathways Programs provide meaningful training and career development opportunities for individuals who are at the beginning of their federal service. There are 3 components to the Pathways Program. The Department must apply Veterans' preference criteria.

- **Internship Program:** This program is for current students enrolled in a wide variety of educational institutions from high schools, colleges, trade schools and other qualifying educational institutions with paid opportunities to work in agencies and explore Federal careers while still in school.
- **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 their military service obligation. These Veterans have up to six years after degree or certificate completion to apply).
- **Presidential Management Fellows (PMF) Program:** A Federal Government entry-level leadership program for individuals who have received a qualifying advanced degree within the preceding two years.
  - Appointments may be permanent or temporary
  - The PMF list of finalists is provided by OPM
- PUBLIC NOTICE REQUIRED: YES
- CTAP/ICTAP REQUIRED: YES



## **Veterans' Preference and Military Spouse Hiring Authorities and Other Flexibilities Resource Guide**

- PROBATIONARY/TRIAL PERIOD: Yes, if it is the initial appointment or the individual has not satisfied the requirement.
- VETERANS' PREFERENCE: **YES**

**Governmentwide Direct-Hire Authority (DHA)** - This authority is authorized by OPM allowing agencies/departments to appoint candidates to positions without regard to the requirements in title 5 U.S.C. 3309 through 3318 when there is either a severe shortage of candidates or a critical hiring need for a position or group of positions. Under the Government-wide DHA, after providing public notice by posting a Job Opportunity Announcement (JOA), qualified individuals may be appointed to competitive service career, career conditional, temporary or term positions, as appropriate, without regard to rating and ranking or Veterans' preference listed in 5 U.S.C. 3309-3318, or 5 C.F.R. part 211 and part 337, subpart A. The

Department encourages hiring managers to consider Veterans and military spouses when selecting from the certificate of eligibles.

- PUBLIC NOTICE REQUIRED: YES
- CTAP/ICTAP REQUIRED: YES
- PROBATIONARY/TRIAL PERIOD: Yes, if it is the initial appointment or the individual has not satisfied the requirement.
- VETERANS' PREFERENCE: **NO**

**VA Direct-Hire Authority** - A department specific DHA granted to VA by OPM enabling VA HR practitioners to appoint candidates to positions without regard to the competitive service requirements in title 5 U.S.C. 3309 through 3318 when there is a critical hiring need. OPM approves DHAs for a specified time period therefore, VA HR practitioners should ensure they do not use the authority past the expiration date. The Department encourages hiring managers to consider Veterans and military spouses when selecting from the certificate of eligibles.

- PUBLIC NOTICE REQUIRED: YES
- CTAP/ICTAP REQUIRED: YES
- PROBATIONARY/TRIAL PERIOD: Yes, if it is the initial appointment or the individual has not satisfied the requirement.
- VETERANS' PREFERENCE: **NO**

**Consult with your servicing HR Practitioner regarding the consideration of whether hybrid, telework, or remote is an option for positions.**



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## DERIVED PREFERENCE

This preference simply follows the same appointment process as Veterans' preference.

Derived Preference is a method where, a spouse, widow/widower, or parent of a Veteran may qualify for preference if the Veteran is not able to use it. Under the scenario of derived preference, the qualified family member may be entitled to preference based on the same Veteran's service if the family member meets the requirements outlined below:

- A **spouse is eligible** if the Veteran has a service-connected disability and has been unable to qualify for any Federal position in the civil service along the general lines of his or her usual occupation.
- A **widow or widower** of a Veteran is eligible for preference if the widow/widower did not divorce or has not remarried **and** either
  - the Veteran served during a war or during the period from April 28, 1952, through July 1, 1955, or in a campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge has been authorized; or
  - the Veteran died while on active duty that included service described immediately above under conditions that would not have been the basis for other than an honorable or general discharge.
- A **parent** of a Veteran is eligible if
  - 1) the Veteran is permanently and totally disabled, **or**
  - 2) the Veteran died under honorable conditions while on active duty during a war **or** in a campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge has been authorized, **and**, in addition to meeting criteria (1) or (2),
    - the spouse of the parent is totally and permanently disabled; **or**
    - the parent, when preference is claimed, is unmarried; **or**
    - the parent, when preference is claimed, is married but legally separated from his or her spouse.

If a family member is eligible to claim derived preference, their husband/wife or parent must be Veteran preference eligible and the eligible family member can apply under the Veterans Employment Opportunity Act (VEOA) authority, when filling a permanent position.

**Note:** The family member must provide acceptable documentation of their preference or appointment eligibility. If claiming 10–point preference, the family member will need to submit a [Standard Form \(SF-15\) \(Fillable PDF file\)](#) Application for 10-point Veterans' Preference. When completing this form, be sure to attach all Veteran Documents DD-214, Report of Casualty DD-1300 and VA letters indicating the Veteran's compensable service-connected disability rating.

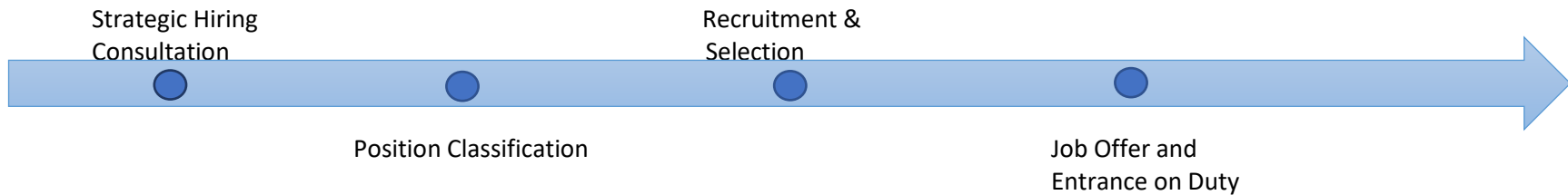
### Source Links:

- [Application For 10-Point Veterans' Preference](#)
- [VA for Vets: Veterans' Preference and Special Hiring Authorities](#)

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### Sample Hiring Timeline

Based on General Customer Service Standards



**Time To Fill Begins When a Position is Vacated**

**Time to Hire begins When the Need to Fill a Position is Validated. Time to Hire data is measured and reported in calendar days.**

Actions	Timeframes for Service
<b>Validation of Request for Personnel Action</b>	Within 2 Days Upon Approval
<b>Request to Draft Vacancy Announcement Package</b>	Within 6 Days of Approval
<b>Draft Vacancy Announcement Package to Approved Announcement Package</b>	Within 2 Days
<b>Announcement Open to Announcement Closed</b>	Within 10 Days
<b>Announcement Closed to Certification Issue</b>	Within 16 Days
<b>Certificate Issue to Certificate Review Returned</b>	Within 15 Days
<b>Certificate Review Returned to Received Tentative Offer Response</b>	Within 3 Days
<b>Received Tentative Offer Response to Initiate Background Investigation</b>	Within 10 Days
<b>Initiate Background Investigation to Send Official Offer</b>	Within 2 Days
<b>Send Official Offer to New Hire Actual Start Date</b>	Within 14 Days

Please note reference checks are required for positions and must be submitted with your selection