



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer

VA Central Office  
Washington, DC

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## OFFICE OF THE CHIEF HUMAN CAPITAL OFFICER (OCHCO) BULLETIN

**SUBJECT:** Department of Veterans Affairs exception for Housekeeping Aids from 5 U.S.C § 3310 Appointment to Positions Restricted to Preference Eligibles

This Bulletin clarifies the impact of the Sergeant First Class Heath Robinson Honoring Our Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act of 2022, Section 905, Expansion of Opportunities for Housekeeping Aids (P.L. 117-168) on the recruitment and hiring of Housekeeping Aids in the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

Effective August 10, 2022, Section 905 of the PACT Act amended 5 U.S.C. § 3310 to remove the preference eligible restriction on recruitment of Housekeeping Aid positions, occupational series 3566 in the Department of Veteran Affairs. Section 3310 of title 5, United States Code is amended to state, "In examinations for positions of guards, elevator operators, messengers, and custodians in the competitive service, other than for positions of housekeeping aids in the Department of Veterans Affairs, competition is restricted to preference eligibles as long as preference eligibles are available."

As a result of the change in the law, regulatory guidance in 5 C.F.R § 330 subpart D, no longer applies to the recruitment of Housekeeping Aids in VA. We are in the process of amending VA Handbook 5005, Part II, Chapter 2, Section B, paragraph 5, Appointment to Positions Restricted to Preference Eligibles to include these updated provisions. This is a vital step to address longstanding recruitment challenges with this occupation. The change allows VA to continue its focus on caring for our Nation's Veterans through increased access to a broader pool of honorably discharged Veterans and other qualified candidates to maintain cleanliness standards in VA health care facilities. Housekeeping Aids play an integral role in maintaining Occupational Safety and Health Administration standards and alleviating barriers to hiring them ultimately increases VA's ability to provide excellence in patient care.

USA Staffing Job Opportunity Announcements (JOAs) for Housekeeping Aids will no longer contain language identifying that these positions are restricted to preference eligibles. The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) is in the process of updating VA's USA Staffing Delegated Examining and Merit Promotion Housekeeping Aid templates accordingly. Facilities may recruit Housekeeping Aid positions using the same process

as other Federal Wage System positions. Veterans' preference rules apply as they would for any other title 5 covered occupation.

**ACTION REQUIRED:** HR Officers shall share this information with their staff and hiring officials. Questions regarding this notice may be directed to the Title 5 Staffing Policy team at [vatitle5staffingpoli@va.gov](mailto:vatitle5staffingpoli@va.gov).

**Issued by: OCHCO/Recruitment and Placement Policy Service (059)**

## **Questions and Answers for Exception of Housekeeping Aids from 5 U.S.C §3310**

### **General Information**

#### **1. When does the change become effective?**

Effective August 10, 2022, Section 905 of the PACT Act amended 5 U.S.C. § 3310 removing the preference eligible restriction on recruitment of Housekeeping Aids, all 3566 positions in the Department of Veteran Affairs.

#### **2. Does this only apply to Wage Grade or are Wage Leader and Wage Supervisor covered?**

This covers all occupational series 3566 positions and applies to Wage Grade (WG) nonsupervisory, Wage Leaders (WL) leader, and Wage Supervisors (WS) supervisory.

#### **3. How are announcements/certificates handled that are already out? Should the restricted position verbiage be removed?**

There will be no change to announcements/certificates that are already out. The change is only effective to new recruitments on and after August 10, 2022.

#### **4. Do we still use Housekeeping Aid templates in USA Staffing?**

Veterans Health Administration is currently updating USA Staffing Delegated Examining and Merit Promotion Housekeeping Aid templates to ensure that USA Staffing Job Opportunity Announcements (JOAs) for Housekeeping Aids (3566 positions) no longer indicate that these positions are restricted to preference eligibles. VA HR staff must comply with all collective bargaining agreements, local supplemental agreements, and memoranda of understanding when implementing this guidance.

#### **5. Do we have to follow Veterans' preference rules when recruiting for Housekeeping Aids?**

Veterans' preference rules apply as they would for any other Title 5 covered occupation. Section 905 of the PACT Act amending 5 U.S.C § 3310 only removes the preference eligible restriction on recruitment of Housekeeping Aids within the Department of Veteran Affairs. However, the removal of the restriction on preference eligible Veterans for this occupational series opens the option to use certain hiring flexibilities open to other Title 5 occupations such as Direct Hire Authority (with appropriate approval).