



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer

VA Central Office  
Washington, DC

April 26, 2022

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

**SUBJECT:** New Expedited Hiring Authority for College Graduates

1. **Purpose.** This OCHCO Bulletin provides notification of a new hiring authority to appoint college graduates to professional and administrative positions in the competitive service at the GS-11 grade level or below.
2. **References.**
  - a. [Federal Register, Vol. 86, No. 212, Hiring Authority for College Graduates](#), dated November 5, 2021.
  - b. [5 U.S.C § 3115. Expedited Hiring Authority for College Graduates](#).
  - c. [P.L. 115-232, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019](#).
3. **Background.** The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) issued an interim rule on November 5, 2021, to amend its career and career-conditional employment regulations. The revision is necessary to implement the John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2019, which requires OPM to issue regulations to establish expedited hiring authorities for college graduates.
4. **Eligibility.**
  - a. An individual is eligible who has received a bachelor's or advanced degree within two years of submitting an application. The two-year eligibility period begins on the date the degree is received, not the graduation ceremony date. (Intervening uniform service of at least four years will extend the application time period two years from the date of completion of service.)
  - b. The degree must be from an institution of higher education as defined by the Higher Education Act of 1965.
  - c. Individual must meet the minimum qualifications prescribed or approved by OPM.

- 5. Type of Appointments.** Individuals appointed under this authority will be appointed to permanent career or career conditional appointments in the competitive service.
- 6. Classification.** Positions under this authority may be classified in any administrative or professional series up to the GS-11 grade level, including positions with promotion potential above the GS-11 grade level.
- 7. Numerical Limitations.** Appointments under this authority are limited to 15% of all appointments made under competitive examining procedures to professional or administrative positions at the GS-11 or below level in the previous fiscal year. For FY2022, VA is limited to 90 appointments. Therefore, based on FY2021 usage, Administration (and Staff Office) limits will be VBA- 54, VHA- 34, NCA-2. Each Administration must provide a Point of Contact (POC) to OCHCO's Recruitment and Placement Policy Service (RPPS) for tracking its respective hires.
- 8. Public Notice Requirements.** HR Offices must advertise positions in a manner to ensure a diverse applicant pool. VA HR Offices must post these job announcements using the USA Staffing system to collect demographic information, meet the requirements of 5 U.S.C. § 3327(b) and to fulfill reporting requirements.
- 9. Application of Veterans' Preference and Selection Priority.** VA HR Office staff appoint eligible candidates using this new expedited hiring authority without regard to rating, ranking and Veterans' preference provisions under 5 U.S.C. §§ 3309 through 3319, and must adhere to merit principles. HR Office staff do not have to clear Career Transition Assistance Plans (CTAP), and Interagency Career Transition Assistance Plans (ICTAP); however, they must clear reemployment priority lists (RPL).
- 10. Action Required.** VA HR Office staff who use this authority must comply with applicable appointment procedures, adhere to limitations, track usage accordingly, and respond to related data requests through their respective Administration POC's to facilitate end of year reporting, upon request.
- 11. Additional Information.** OCHCO's Recruitment and Placement Policy Service (RPPS) will revise VA Handbook 5005 accordingly to include provisions of this new authority. These provisions are separate and distinct from the Pathways Programs, which provides for appointments of students, recent graduates and Presidential Management Fellows in the title 5 excepted service. Pathways Programs guidance can be found in VA Handbook 5005, Part II, Appendix N, Pathways Programs.
- 12. Coding.** OPM is currently updating the [Guide to Processing Personnel Actions](#), Chapters 9 to reflect new legal authority codes for this appointing authority.

| Type of Appt                   | Code/Nature of Action                                 | Code/Legal Authority        |
|--------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| Career Appointment             | 100/ Career Appt<br>501/ Conv to Career Appt          | LAU/ Regulation<br>315.614a |
| Career-Conditional Appointment | 101/ Career-Cond Appt<br>501/Conv to Career-Cond Appt | LAU/ Regulation<br>315.614a |

**13. Questions.** For questions regarding this Bulletin, please email the OCHCO, Recruitment and Placement Policy Service at [vatitle5staffingpoli@va.gov](mailto:vatitle5staffingpoli@va.gov).

**Issued by: VA/OCHCO/Recruitment and Placement Policy Service**