NIH Priority Placement Program (PPP) Handbook

Guidance for Displaced Employees

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Purpose

The NIH OHR is committed to supporting employees affected by downsizing, reorganization, restructuring, compensable workplace injury, or other similar events. This guidance is to be used in conjunction with current laws, regulations, bargaining agreements, and HHS policy, including HHS Instruction 330-2: Priority Placement Programs (CTAP, ICTAP, RPL and PRL).

Overview

This guide covers the following plans and programs for federal employment following job loss or displacement:

- **Career Transition Assistance Plan (CTAP)**: Placement into another position within HHS for surplus or displaced employees
- **Interagency Career Transition Assistance Plan (ICTAP)**: Placement in non-HHS federal agencies for surplus or displaced employees
- **Reemployment Priority List (RPL)**: For competitive service reemployment within HHS
- **Priority Reemployment List (PRL)**: For excepted service reemployment within HHS

Coverage

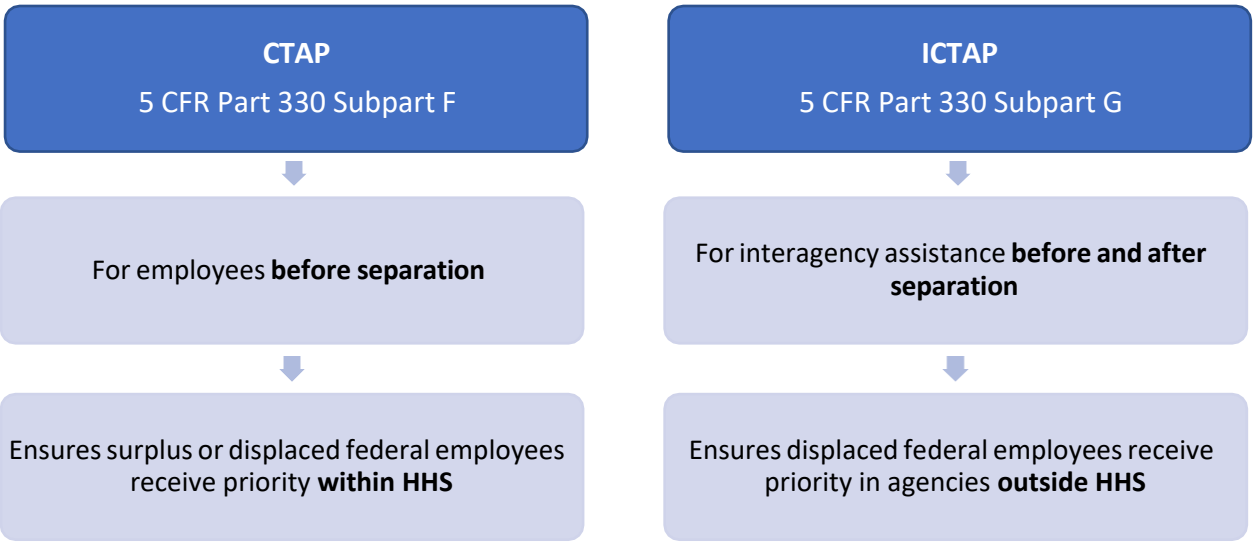
This guidance covers the following Title 5 NIH Employees:

- Competitive service and certain excepted service employees eligible for priority selection under CTAP and ICTAP at grades GS-15 or below (or equivalent)
- Current or former NIH employees eligible for priority reemployment consideration via the RPL (competitive service) or PRL (excepted service) programs

Career Transition Plans

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) requires Executive Branch agencies to provide career transition assistance to employees affected by downsizing, restructuring, reorganization, or other similar events.

Two types of career transition programs exist: the Career Transition Assistance Plan (CTAP) and the Interagency Career Transition Assistance Plan (ICTAP). General information on these programs is shown below, followed by more detailed information on how each program works.



Both programs require eligible individuals to apply to vacancies in which they are well qualified via https://www.usajobs.gov/.

TIP: Individuals are encouraged to update their USAJOBS profiles to indicate their CTAP or ICTAP eligibility under the Federal Service section and make their resume and profile searchable for Agency Talent Portal (ATP) users by selecting a saved resume under the Documents tab. This may increase chances of being considered as agencies may be proactively searching for CTAP/ICTAP eligible candidates in the same local commuting area of current vacancies.

Career Transition Assistance Plan (CTAP)

The CTAP helps surplus or displaced employees transition into other roles **within HHS** when facing separation due to downsizing, restructuring, reorganization, or other similar events.

Who is Eligible for the CTAP?

You may be eligible for selection under CTAP if you meet the following criteria:

1. You are scheduled for separation due to a reduction in force (RIF) from a career or career-conditional **competitive service** appointment and received either a specific RIF notice of separation or a Certificate of Expected Separation (CES), or you received a notice of proposed removal for declining a management-directed reassignment outside your current position's local commuting area;
2. You are in **Tenure Group I or II** (block 24 of SF-50) within the competitive service (block 34 of SF-50);
3. Your most recent performance rating is at least **"Fully Successful" (Level 3)** or equivalent; and
4. You have not declined a RIF offer that:
    a) Matches your work schedule, and

b) Has a representative rate of pay at least equal to your current or former position (i.e., Step 4 for General Schedule (GS) positions, and Step 2 for Federal Wage System (FWS) positions).

Excepted Service and CTAP Eligibility

If you meet the eligibility standards above with the exception of the competitive service criteria and you hold an excepted service appointment without time limit, you may also be eligible for CTAP, provided that your appointment, by law, grants both noncompetitive eligibility and selection priority for competitive service positions.

CTAP Coverage and Priority

- Applies to permanent or time-limited competitive service vacancies lasting 121 days or more within HHS.
- Eligibility is valid only within the same commuting area as your current position impacted by RIF.
- The position you are applying to must be at or below your current grade and without higher promotion potential.
- You must apply to the vacancy via https://www.usajobs.gov during its open period and include all documentation detailed within the vacancy announcement.
- You must be determined well qualified for the position.
- CTAP eligibles will receive priority placement consideration over most applicants for vacant positions that match their qualifications unless the hiring action meets one of the exceptions under Appendix A: Exceptions to CTAP of HHS Instruction 330-2.

Eligibility Period

CTAP eligibility expires on the effective date of your RIF separation.

Early Termination of CTAP Eligibility

Your eligibility for the CTAP will end before the effective date of your RIF separation if you:

a) Separate for other reasons prior to the RIF effective date;
b) Accept a career, career-conditional, or excepted appointment without time limit in any Federal agency;
c) You are appointed to another HHS position at any grade or pay level, either permanent or time-limited;
d) Decline or do not respond to a written job offer for a permanent appointment at any grade or pay level in the competitive or excepted service with HHS within seven (7) business days; or
e) Receive notice that notice rescinding, canceling, or modifying the notice which established CTAP eligibility.

Interagency Career Transition Assistance Plan (ICTAP)

The ICTAP helps displaced employees transition into other roles **outside HHS** when facing separation due to downsizing, restructuring, reorganization, or other similar events.

Who is Eligible for the ICTAP?

You may be eligible for selection under ICTAP if you meet the following criteria:

1. You are a separated employee or scheduled for separation due to a RIF from a career or career-conditional **competitive service** appointment and received either a specific RIF notice of separation or a Certificate of Expected Separation (CES), or received a notice of proposed removal (or were separated) for declining a management-directed reassignment outside your current (or former) position's local commuting area;
2. You are in **Tenure Group I or II** (block 24 of SF-50) within the competitive service (block 34 of SF-50);
3. Your most recent performance rating is at least **"Fully Successful" (Level 3)** or equivalent; and
4. You have not declined a RIF offer that:
    a) Matches your work schedule, and
    b) Has a representative rate of pay at least equal to your current or former position (i.e., Step 4 for General Schedule (GS) positions, and Step 2 for Federal Wage System (FWS) positions).

Excepted Service and ICTAP Eligibility

If you meet the eligibility standards above with the exception of the competitive service criteria and you hold an excepted service appointment without time limit, you may also be eligible for ICTAP, provided that your appointment, by law, grants both noncompetitive eligibility and selection priority for competitive service positions.

ICTAP Coverage and Priority

- Eligibility is valid only within the same commuting area as your current or last (if separated) permanent position of record.
- Applies to permanent or time-limited competitive service vacancies lasting 121 days or more and accepting applicants outside HHS.
- The position you are applying to must be at or below your current grade and without higher promotion potential.
- You must apply to the vacancy via https://www.usajobs.gov during its open period and include all documentation detailed within the vacancy announcement.
- You must be determined well qualified for the position.
- ICTAP eligibles must receive priority placement consideration unless the hiring action meets one of the exceptions under Appendix B: Exceptions to ICTAP of HHS Instruction 330-2.

Eligibility Period
ICTAP eligibility expires one (1) year from the effective date of your RIF separation.

Early Termination of ICTAP Eligibility
Your eligibility for the ICTAP will end before the one (1) year period from the effective date of your RIF separation if you:

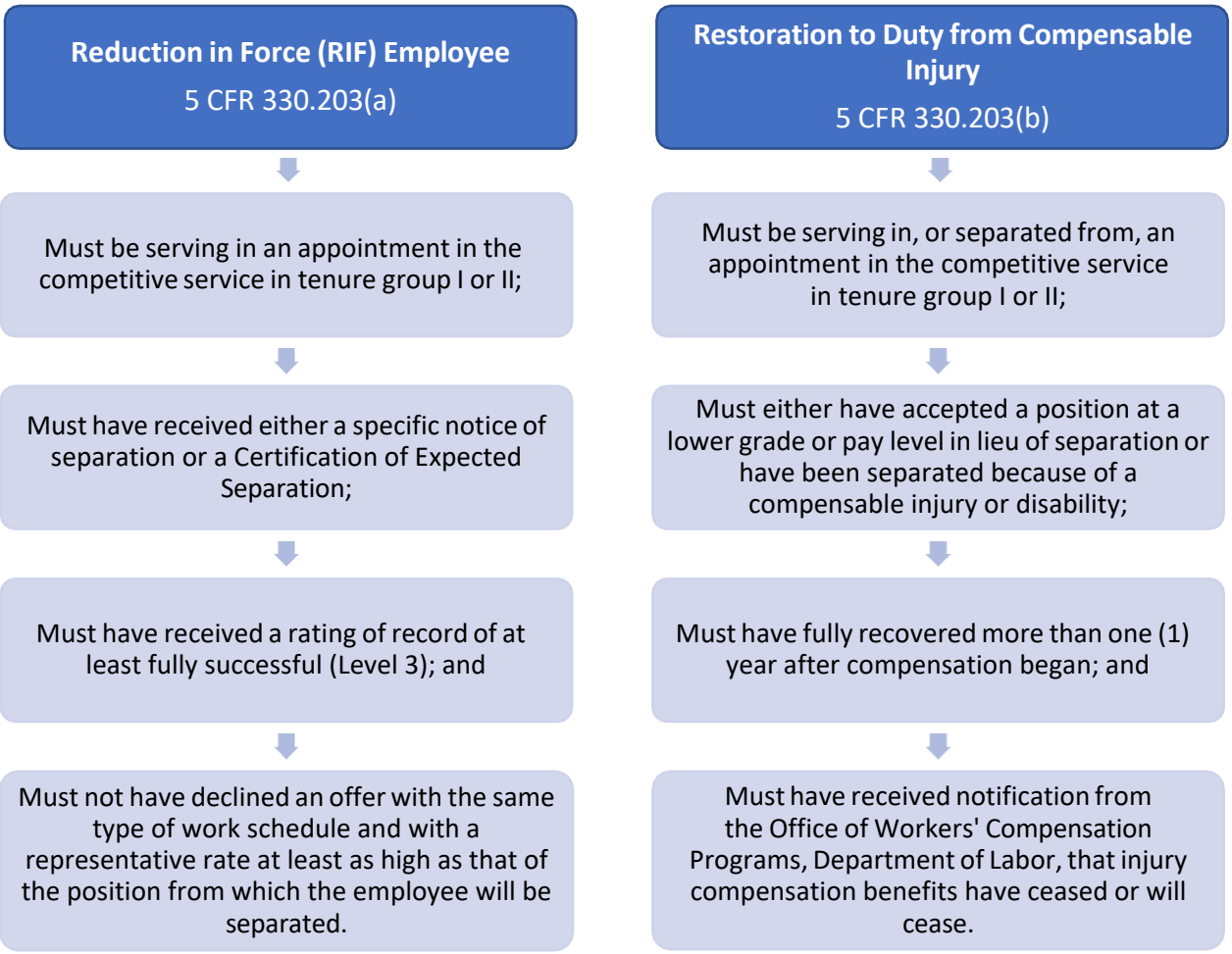
a) Separate for any reasons prior to the RIF effective date;
b) Accept a career, career-conditional, or excepted appointment without time limit in any Federal agency;
c) Decline or do not respond to a written job offer or availability inquiry for any permanent position within seven (7) business days;
d) Decline or miss an interview, or cannot be contacted; or
e) Receive notice rescinding, canceling, or modifying the notice which established ICTAP eligibility.

Priority Placement Programs

Employees impacted by RIF or return to work from a compensable workplace injury may be eligible for registration within the priority placement system. The two programs consist of the RPL (for competitive service employees) and the PRL (for excepted service employees). The RPL and PRL lists are housed in the HHS HR Exchange (ServiceNow) system.

Reemployment Priority List (RPL)

The RPL provides reemployment priority to **Title 5 competitive service employees** who are separated by a Reduction in Force (RIF) or fully recovered from a compensable workplace injury after more than one (1) year, as explained below.



RPL Eligibility (RIF)

You are eligible to register for the RPL based on RIF if you meet the following criteria:

1. You are scheduled for separation due to a RIF from a career or career-conditional competitive service appointment and received either a specific RIF notice of separation, or a Certificate of Expected Separation (CES);
2. You are in **Tenure Group I or II** (block 24 of SF-50) within the **competitive service** (block 34 of SF-50);
3. Your most recent performance rating is at least **"Fully Successful" (Level 3)** or equivalent; and
4. You have not declined a RIF offer that:
    a. Matches your work schedule, and
    b. Has a representative rate of pay at least equal to your current or former position (i.e., Step 4 for General Schedule (GS) positions, and Step 2 for Federal Wage System (FWS) positions).

RPL Eligibility (Compensable Injury)

You may be eligible to register for the RPL based on restoration to duty from a compensable injury if you meet the following criteria:

1. You are a former NIH **competitive service employee (tenure group I or II)** fully recovered from a compensable injury (described under 5 CFR Part 353) more than one (1) year after compensation began;
2. You either accepted a position at a lower grade or pay level in lieu of separation or were separated because of a compensable injury or disability;
3. You received notification from the Department of Labor that injury compensation benefits have ended or will end; and
4. You requested consideration for reemployment in the agency within 30 days after the date compensation ceases, except that when an appeal for continuation of compensation is filed, the 30-day period begins the day after resolution is reached.

RPL Coverage and Priority

- RPL registration based on a RIF action is valid only within the same commuting area as your current (or former) position.
- RPL registration based on a compensable injury may be valid for positions in a commuting area other than your former position, if there is an existing RPL for that requested area.
- RPL coverage applies only to competitive service positions within HHS.
- If you are registered in the RPL, you will receive priority placement consideration over most non-HHS applicants for vacant positions that match the position from which you were or will be separated from, including additional positions you are registered for that match your qualifications.
- When candidates are being considered for a vacant position from anywhere in the U.S. (or equivalent) or the duty location is negotiable after selection, all qualified RPL eligibles registered for the position at the grade or pay level must first be given selection priority, regardless of their official duty location, before names of other qualified competitive service candidates may be referred (unless an exception applies).
- Hiring exceptions to RPL may be reviewed under Appendix C: Exceptions to RPL of HHS Instruction 330-2.

RPL Eligibility Period

RPL registration **expires no later than two (2) years** from the effective date of your RIF separation, or the date you were registered for the RPL due to recovery from a compensable work-related injury.

Termination of RPL Eligibility

Your eligibility for the RPL will end before the periods above if you:

a) Request removal from the RPL in writing;
b) Separate for other reasons prior to the RIF effective date;
c) Are placed in a position without time limit at any grade or pay level within HHS;

d) Are placed in a position under a career, career-conditional, or excepted appointment without time limit at any grade or pay level in any agency;
e) Decline or do not respond within seven (7) business days to a written job offer or availability inquiry for a position without time limit, the same work schedule, and with a representative rate of pay at least as high as the position from which you have been or will be separated;
f) Decline or miss an interview, or cannot be contacted within seven (7) business days; or
g) Receive notice that you no longer meet RPL eligibility conditions.

If a registrant declines or does not respond to a scheduled interview, availability inquiry, or job offer for a career, career-conditional, or excepted appointment without time limit, and the position meets the acceptable conditions of the individual's RPL registration, they will be removed from the RPL for:

- The grade or pay level of the offered position, and
- All grades or pay levels below the offered grade or pay level.

The registrant will remain on the RPL for positions with a representative rate *higher* than the position they declined or did not respond to, up to the grade or pay level they last held, unless their RPL eligibility expires or is otherwise terminated.

How to Register for the RPL

To be entered on the RPL you must submit your application and resume via the form at: http://hr.nih.gov//priority-placement-program-registration on or before your RIF separation date, 30 days after the date of injury compensation benefits stop, or the date Department of Labor denies an appeal for continuation of injury compensation benefits.

RPL eligibles may specify conditions they will accept, when registering, including:

1. Additional occupation(s) and series. Note: If you request consideration for additional occupational series, your resume must clearly show that you meet the required experience and education requirements for that series);
2. Grades lower than the position from which the registrant was/will be separated;
3. Work schedules (full-time, part-time, seasonal, or intermittent); and
4. Minimum hours of work per week, as applicable.

OHR will register eligible employees under the RPL within the HR Exchange (ServiceNow) system no later than ten (10) calendar days after receipt of the employee application.

If you need assistance with registering for the RPL or would like to update your existing registration information or resume, please contact: nihrifinquiries@od.nih.gov.

Appeals Process

If you believe your reemployment priority rights have been violated, you may appeal to the Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB) as described under 5 CFR 330.214.

Excepted Service Employees
If you are serving under an excepted appointment, the RPL does not apply. However, you may be eligible for reemployment consideration under the PRL (Priority Reemployment List) for excepted service positions filled under the same authority as the position you separated from. PRL follows a process similar to the RPL explained in the section below.

Priority Reemployment List (PRL)

The PRL provides reemployment priority to **Title 5 excepted service employees** who are furloughed or separated by a Reduction in Force (RIF), fully recovered from a compensable workplace injury after more than one (1) year after compensation began, or a preference eligible who received an MSPB decision based on an appeal of an adverse action, where the MSPB found the employee was unjustifiably dismissed but is not entitled to immediate restoration under the MSPB's decision.

In accordance with HHS Instruction 330-2 (Priority Placement Programs), the PRL is for employees subject to the provisions of Title 5. **This means excepted service employees on time-limited, political, or non-Title 5 appointments (e.g., Title 42) are not eligible for PRL.**

PRL Eligibility (RIF)
You are eligible to register for the PRL based on RIF if you meet the following criteria:

1. You are furloughed or separated under RIF without delinquency or misconduct from a **Title 5 excepted service appointment without time limit;**
2. Your most recent performance rating is at least **"Fully Successful" (Level 3)** or equivalent; and
3. You have not declined a RIF offer that:
    a. Matches your work schedule, and
    b. Has a representative rate of pay at least equal to your current or former position (e.g., Step 4 for General Schedule (GS) positions, and Step 2 for Federal Wage System (FWS) positions).

PRL Eligibility (Appeal to Adverse Action)
You are eligible to register for PRL as a former NIH excepted service employee if you are a preference eligible, and the MSPB found you to have been unjustifiably dismissed from NIH but are not entitled to immediate restoration by the MSPB decision.

PRL Eligibility (Compensable Injury)
You are eligible to register for the PRL based on restoration to duty from a compensable injury if you meet the following criteria:

1. You are a former NIH **excepted service employee** fully recovered from a compensable injury (described under 5 CFR Part 353) more than one (1) year after compensation began;
2. You either accepted a position at a lower grade or pay level in lieu of separation or were

separated because of a compensable injury or disability;

3. You received notification from the Department of Labor that injury compensation benefits have ended or will end; and
4. You requested consideration for reemployment in the agency within 30 days after the date compensation ceases, except that when an appeal for continuation of compensation is filed, the 30-day period begins the day after resolution is reached.

PRL Coverage and Priority

- Your PRL registration is valid only within the same commuting area as your current (or former) position.
- PRL coverage applies only to excepted service positions within HHS.
- If you are registered in the PRL, you will receive priority placement consideration over most non-HHS applicants for vacant excepted service positions that match the position from which you were or will be separated from, including additional positions you are registered for that match your qualifications.
- When candidates are being considered for a vacant position from anywhere in the U.S. (or equivalent) or the duty location is negotiable after selection, all qualified PRL eligibles registered for the position at the grade or pay level must first be given selection priority, regardless of their official duty location, before names of other qualified excepted service candidates may be referred (unless an exception applies).
- Hiring exceptions to PRL may be reviewed under Appendix D: Exceptions to PRL of HHS Instruction 330-2.

PRL Eligibility Period

PRL registration **expires no later than two (2) years** from the effective date of your RIF separation, or the date you were registered for the PRL due to recovery from a compensable work-related injury.

Termination of PRL Eligibility

Your eligibility for the PRL will end before the periods above if you:

a) Request removal from the PRL in writing;
b) Separate for other reasons prior to the RIF effective date;
c) Are placed in a position without a time limit with any federal agency;
d) Decline or do not respond to a written job offer for an excepted appointment without time limit within seven (7) business days;
e) Fail to reply to an inquiry concerning a specific position having a representative rate at least as high, and with the same type of work schedule, as the position from which you were separated within seven (7) business days;
f) Decline or miss an interview, or cannot be contacted within seven (7) business days; or
g) Receive notice that you no longer meet PRL eligibility conditions.

How to Register for the PRL
To be entered on the PRL you must submit your application and resume via the form at: http://hr.nih.gov//priority-placement-program-registration on or before your RIF separation date, 30 days after the date of injury compensation benefits stop, or the date Department of Labor denies an appeal for continuation of injury compensation benefits.

PRL eligibles may specify conditions they will accept, when registering, including:

1. Additional occupation(s) and series. Note: If you request consideration for additional occupational series, your resume must clearly show that you meet the required experience and education requirements for that series;
2. Grades lower than the position from which the registrant was/will be separated;
3. Work schedules (full-time, part-time, seasonal, or intermittent); and
4. Minimum hours of work per week, as applicable.

OHR will register eligible employees under the PRL within the HR Exchange (ServiceNow) system no later than ten (10) calendar days after receipt of the employee application.

If you need If you need assistance with registering for the PRL or would like to update your existing registration information or resume, please contact: nihrifinquiries@od.nih.gov.

Appeals Process
If you are entitled to priority consideration and are a preference eligible, or suffered a compensable injury, you have appeal rights to the MSPB if you believe your reemployment rights were violated.

General Transition Tips

Resume
Displaced employees should ensure their employment applications and resumes are up-to-date and accurate. It's important to completely describe your knowledge, skills, and abilities, when applying or registering under the placement programs described in this guidance. In addition to listing your current and past work assignments, include all information that describes your qualifications (e.g., licenses or certifications, education, specialized training, etc.).

Grades
Prior to registering in the RPL or PRL (if eligible), carefully consider the lowest grade level you are willing to accept. If you are available for placement at lower grades, opportunities for continuing your Federal career will be greater. If you enter an NIH position at a lower grade without a break in service and are otherwise eligible, your pay may be set in accordance with the retained grade or retained pay rules that are applicable to your position. If you are not eligible for grade or pay retention (e.g., if you are placed following a break in service), your last earned rate of pay may be preserved to the maximum extent permitted by law and applicable regulations.

Identifying Additional Federal Job Series for Which You Qualify

It's recommended that displaced employees review the OPM General Schedule Qualification Standards and/or Standards for Federal Wage System Positions to determine additional occupations for which you may be qualified. The General Schedule standards cover white collar occupations in the Federal service. The Federal Wage System covers trade, craft, and labor work in the Federal service. The following steps may be taken to help discover additional federal occupational series for which you are qualified.

Step 1: Understand What an Occupational Series Is

Each federal job is classified into an **occupational series** based on the type of work. For example:

- 0343 – Management and Program Analyst
- 2210 – Information Technology Specialist
- 0510 – Accountant
- 4206 – Plumbing
- 2805 – Electrician

Each series has specific qualification standards regarding education, experience, or both.

Step 2: Identify Your Background and Build Your Resume

Prepare a detailed list of:

- Degrees and major fields of study
- Courses completed (including semester hours)
- Certifications or licenses
- Work experience (paid and unpaid)
- Military or volunteer service

Step 3: Use the OPM Qualification Standards Websites

Navigate to the official OPM site to review the Qualifications Standards for General Schedule and Federal Wage System positions.

There are six main group standards within the General Schedule, which are:

- Clerical and Administrative Support Positions
- Technical and Medical Support Positions
- Administrative and Management Positions
- Professional and Scientific Positions
- Competitive Service Student Trainee Positions
- Pathways Internship Positions

The Federal Wage System contains 34 group standards which may be viewed here.

Step 4: Browse Relevant Occupational Groups
Review major groups to find potential matches. Examples:

Major Group	Common Series	Example Roles
Accounting & Budget	0501, 0510, 0560	Financial Management Analyst, Accountant, Budget Analyst
Human Resources	0201	HR Specialist
IT Specialist	2210	IT Specialist
Engineering & Architecture	0810, 0830, 0850	Civil, Mechanical, Electrical Engineers

Step 5: Check Qualification Standards for Each Series
Click into a series page to view:

- **Basic Requirements** (e.g., degree in specific field)
- **Specialized Experience** (specific job duties performed at a particular grade level)
- **Substitution Options** (education vs experience)
- **Examples of qualifying experience**

Example: **GS-0343 Management Analyst**

- **Education**: No specific degree required
- **Experience**: Must show ability to analyze, evaluate, and improve program operations

Step 6: Match Your Profile to Job Series
Use a worksheet to track alignment:

Job Series	Education Match	Experience Match	Notes
0343	✓ Not required	✓ 5 years program analysis	Strong fit
2210	X No IT degree	✓ 7 years IT support	Eligible via experience
0510	✓ Accounting BA	X No direct experience	May qualify for entry-level

Step 7: Use USAJOBS to Explore Openings
Once you've identified potential job series:

- Go to https://www.usajobs.gov/
- Use filters for **series**, **grade**, and **location**

- Read the **"Qualifications"** section carefully to see if you meet the specific job's requirements

Step 8: Get Help If Needed

For clarify on qualification standards or help evaluating your qualifications. You can contact:

- **Agency HR specialists**
- **Career counselors (internal or external)**

Tips for Success

- Tailor your resume to highlight **specialized experience** relevant to each job series.
- Use **keywords** from the qualification standard in your application.
- If you're missing formal education, look for series that allow **experience substitution**.

Grouped Job Series by Common Skills & Qualifications

Use this section to explore **similar job series** based on shared competencies, education, and experience. If you qualify for one, you may qualify for others in the same group.

Program & Management Analysis

Skills: Critical thinking, data analysis, project coordination, policy evaluation

Common Series:

- **0343** – Management and Program Analyst
- **0301** – Miscellaneous Administration & Program
- **0340** – Program Management

Budget, Financial & Accounting

Skills: Financial analysis, accounting, budgeting, cost estimation

Common Series:

- **0510** – Accountant
- **0511** – Auditor
- **0560** – Budget Analyst
- **0501** – Financial Administration & Program
- **0525** – Accounting Technician

Note: Some series may require coursework in accounting but may allow substitution with experience.

Information Technology & Cybersecurity

Skills: Systems management, cybersecurity, software development, help desk support

Common Series:

- **2210** – IT Specialist
- **1550** – Computer Scientist
- **0854** – Computer Engineer
- **0391** – Telecommunications
- **0301** – Program Analyst (with IT focus)

Tip: Experience can sometimes be substituted for education in the 2210 series.

Human Resources & Workforce Development
Skills: Staffing, classification, employee relations, training development
Common Series:

- **0201** – Human Resources Specialist
- **0230** – HR Assistant
- **1712** – Training Instructor
- **0301** – Program Admin (with HR focus)

Tip: Experience working in personnel offices or advising on HR matters is valuable.

Administrative Support & Office Operations
Skills: Scheduling, recordkeeping, travel, correspondence, clerical support
Common Series:

- **0303** – Misc. Clerk and Assistant
- **0318** – Secretary
- **0326** – Office Automation Clerk
- **1087** – Editorial Assistant

Tip: Many of these positions don't require a degree—great for early career or lateral movement.

Science & Public Health
Skills: Research, data collection, scientific methodology, lab work
Common Series:

- **0401** – General Biological Science
- **0601** – General Health Science
- **0640** – Health Aid and Technician
- **1301** – Physical Scientist
- **1320** – Chemist
- **1530** – Statistician

Tip: Most require a degree in a related science field.

Non-Federal Job Opportunities

While the objective is to place as many displaced employees as possible through the federal career transition and priority placement programs discussed in this guide, vacancies within HHS and across the federal government may be limited. We encourage all individuals to also consider job opportunities outside the federal service.

Potential options to search for such opportunities include:

- https://www.linkedin.com/jobs
- https://www.glassdoor.com/
- https://www.indeed.com/
- https://yrci.com/
- https://www.capitalonecareers.com/
- https://jobs.thermofisher.com/global/en
- https://www.workforamerica.org/civicmatch
- https://www.civicjobs.com/
- https://careers.marriott.com/jobs
- https://www.lockheedmartin.com/en-us/careers/index.html

Frequently Asked Questions

Q1. Does the new two-page limit for resumes rule apply to my RPL or PRL registration record?
Requests to update an existing resume must follow the two-page limit rule. OPM allows agencies to consider applicants with resumes longer than two pages if they pertain to existing RPL or PRL lists because those resumes are considered placement resumes. Resumes submitted with job announcements must comply with the two-page limit. You may be instructed to provide a two-page resume to receive further priority consideration for a particular vacancy if your current RPL or PRL registration record contains a resume that is longer than two pages.

Q2. I am registered under the RPL and received an email inviting me to apply to a vacancy on USAJOBS to receive further consideration for RPL placement priority for that vacancy. I thought RPL was an internal process that did not require me to apply to a vacancy announcement for further consideration. Why must I now apply? If I apply and the hiring agency determines I am not qualified, or I am not selected, does that mean my eligibility under the RPL ends?
Agencies have the discretion to require RPL registrants to apply directly for RPL placement priority under an advertised vacancy announcement in accordance with 5 CFR 330.213(e).

At the NIH, the RPL list is checked (if applicable) upon the start of a hiring action. If more than one individual matches under the RPL with a position based on the grade, job series, and local commuting area to be filled, those individuals are notified that they must apply to a vacancy announcement on USAJOBS to receive further priority consideration for that vacancy. This helps ensure accurate qualification determinations, and proper completion of ratings and rankings of the multiple matches in accordance with HHS policy.

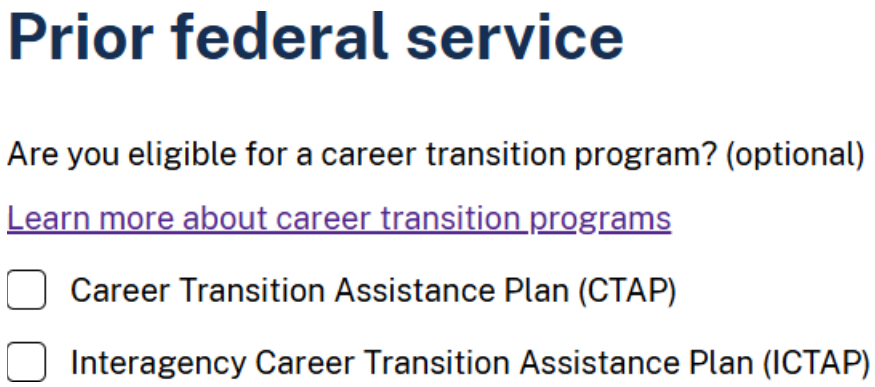
It's important to note that being registered on the RPL does not guarantee placement or a job offer when you initially match with a position being filled, or when you are notified to apply for further priority consideration. Qualification determinations must be conducted every time a vacancy is being filled.

RPL registrants may not be removed from the RPL for failure to apply for a vacancy, or if they are determined not qualified for that vacancy. Registration continues until it expires, or the registrant is removed from the RPL for one of the reasons explained under 5 CFR 330.209.

Q3. I applied to an HHS position outside NIH that matches my RPL or PRL registration (series, grade, and local commuting area). Why has the hiring agency not contacted me?
RPL and PRL are HHS-wide lists, and multiple registrants may exist for the same series/grade. Therefore, being registered does not guarantee contact for every vacancy. For vacancy-specific questions, applicants should contact the agency representative listed on the vacancy announcement, as NIH is unable to monitor applications submitted outside NIH. Note: Not all announcements require RPL/PRL clearance (e.g., internal HHS merit promotion

announcements).

Q4. How do I indicate my RPL or PRL eligibility under my USAJOBS profile?
USAJOBS does not currently offer an option to select RPL or PRL status under the "Federal Service" profile section of USAJOBS profiles. It currently only offers the options to select CTAP and/or ICTAP for career transition program (shown below).



Important notes:

- HHS/NIH maintains an active list of RPL/PRL registrants outside USAJOBS, ensuring priority is applied when appropriate.
- To help identify announcements where RPL or PRL eligibles may apply, you may select relevant Hiring Paths under your Search Preferences within your USAJOBS profile, including the *Career transition (CTAP, ICTAP, RPL)* hiring path under *Federal employees*.
- NIH will monitor USAJOBS systems updates and will notify active registrants from NIH if an RPL or PRL option is added in the future.

Q5. Besides RPL, what other priority consideration can I use when applying for jobs?
You may apply as ICTAP-eligible for positions in non-HHS agencies, provided you are determined to be well-qualified and are otherwise eligible. Please note that NIH HR cannot track applications outside NIH, so you must carefully follow the specific instructions within each agency's announcement.

Q6. If I'm rehired at a grade level lower than that from which I faced RIF separation, will my prior salary be matched?
When reemployed via the RPL or PRL, pay may be set up to step 10 of the grade under which you are reemployed, if otherwise eligible.

Example: If you previously were a GS-14 Step 8 and accept a GS-13 position, your salary may be set up to GS-13 Step 10. Note: Pay retention beyond the step 10 is not allowed if you have had a break in service of one workday or more.

Q7. Must I serve a new probationary period if rehired under the RPL?
Employees reemployed under the RPL are appointed using Reinstatement authority. If you previously completed a one-year probationary period during the time for which your Reinstatement is based, you do not need to serve a new one.

Q8. Do I get my prior sick leave balance back if rehired?
Yes. If you return to federal service, your previous sick leave balance is fully reinstated.

Q9. Will I lose my severance pay if I decline a job offer under the RPL or PRL?
If you decline an offer under the RPL or PRL you will not lose severance.

Registrants remain on the RPL or PRL for positions higher than the offered position, up to the grade level last held, until their eligibility expires or otherwise terminates.

Q10. How do declinations or failures to reply to an interview or job offer impact by current RPL or PRL registration eligibility for future positions?
If you decline or fail to reply to a scheduled interview or job offer for the matched position, you will be removed from the priority list for those grade levels (and below). You will remain eligible for any other grade levels that are above the grade level(s) you are no longer eligible for.

Example: RPL registrant is registered for GS-1102-12 and GS-1102-13 and declines a GS-1102-12 offer or interview. They will no longer remain on the RPL for the GS-1102-12; however, they will remain on the RPL for the GS-1102-13.

Q11. Must I repay a lump-sum annual leave payment if I am reemployed under the PPP?
Yes. Under 5 U.S.C. 6306, if you are reemployed before the end of the lump-sum leave period, you must refund the portion covering the overlap. Refunds must be made based on the pay rate used for the original lump-sum calculation, even if you are reemployed at a lower grade. The refunded hours will then be credited towards your current annual leave balance as a new employee.

Q12. I was previously RIF'd from a GS-1109-14 at NIH and have since been reemployed into a permanent GS-1109-13 position with HHS. Will I remain on the RPL for the GS-14?
No. Accepting placement into the GS-13 position with HHS would end your eligibility for the RPL entirely. In accordance with 5 CFR 330.209, RPL eligibility ends for all registered grades when you are placed into a position without time limit at any grade or pay level within HHS, or upon placement into a career, career-conditional, or excepted appointment without time limit at any grade or pay level in any agency.

Q13. Are employees who are separated during their probationary period under 5 CFR § 11.5(d) eligible for PPP (CTAP, ICTAP, RPL, or PRL)?

No. Employees separated during their probationary period are not considered to have been separated under Reduction in Force (RIF) procedures (5 CFR Part 351) and therefore are not eligible for CTAP, ICTAP, RPL, or PRL. While they may apply for positions under any other hiring authorities for which they are eligible, they cannot claim eligibility under the PPP.

References And Resources

- Reemployment Priority List (RPL): 5 CFR Part 330 Subpart B
- Agency Career Transition Assistance Plan (CTAP) for Local Surplus and Displaced Employees: 5 CFR Part 330 Subpart F
- Interagency Career Transition Assistance Plan (ICTAP) for Displaced Employees: 5 CFR Part 330 Subpart G
- HHS Instruction 330-2: Priority Placement Programs (CTAP, ICTAP, RPL and PRL)
- HHS Instruction 302-1: Excepted Service Employment
- CTAP Appointment Documentation: https://hr.nih.gov/jobs/announcement-links/career-transition-assistance-program
- ICTAP Appointment Documentation: https://hr.nih.gov/jobs/announcement-links/interagency-career-transition-assistance-program
- Resume Tips: https://hr.nih.gov/jobs/how-apply/tips-writing-federal-resume