



Approved for Release

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Date

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT**

**HUMAN RESOURCES (HR) BULLETIN #153, FY12**

**SUBJECT:** Career Transition Assistance Plan (CTAP) and Interagency Career Transition Assistance Plan (ICTAP) Evaluation and Clearance Process

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** Upon release of this Bulletin

**EXPIRATION DATE:** Effective until canceled or superseded

**SUPERSEDES:** HR Bulletin #113, FY10, "Career Transition Assistance Plan (CTAP) and Interagency Career Transition Assistance Plan (ICTAP) Consideration and Clearance Process," dated July 20, 2010.

**REVISIONS:** This bulletin modifies the CTAP clearance process by removing the requirement to advertise a position with a minimum area of consideration of "CTAP eligibles only," for a period of 5 business days when reassigning a current employee between different bureaus in either the same geographic location or different geographic location, and allows for CTAP clearance through the Office of Human Resources Management, Office of Policy and Programs (OPP).

**BACKGROUND:** The Presidential memorandum dated September 12, 1995, entitled "Career Transition Assistance for Federal Employees," requires that Federal Executive Agencies develop career transition plans to assist eligible surplus and displaced Federal workers in finding employment. Department of Commerce (Department) policy requires that Servicing Human Resources Offices (SHROs) identify and report all employees holding CTAP notices to OPP, and inform OPP when an employee is no longer CTAP eligible.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this HR Bulletin is to establish Department-wide criteria for evaluating candidates who request special selection priority consideration under the Department's CTAP and ICTAP, and to establish procedures for maintaining a current list of surplus and displaced employees who are eligible for CTAP. This will assist bureaus/operating units to uniformly apply criteria and evaluate candidates as well as to help candidates understand eligibility requirements. This HR Bulletin is to be used in conjunction with the Department's CTAP/ICTAP Plan, which can be found at the end this HR Bulletin.

**POLICY:** When evaluating CTAP and ICTAP eligibles, candidates will be determined to have met the definition of “well-qualified” for the purposes of special selection priority consideration if they meet the following criteria. “Well-qualified” for job purposes includes those candidates who have been determined to exceed minimum qualifications for the position by attaining at least a rating of 85, but otherwise may or may not be among the highly or best-qualified candidates.

**PROCEDURE:** SHROs will identify and report all employees holding CTAP notices to the OPP using the “DOC Employee CTAP Eligibility List,” via e-mail to [ctap@doc.gov](mailto:ctap@doc.gov). Additionally, SHROs must inform OPP when an employee is no longer CTAP eligible.

**CTAP/ICTAP CLEARANCE:** SHROs must clear CTAP with OPP before reassigning an employee from one geographic location to another within the same bureau or between bureaus. For transfers from other agencies or reinstatements, the position must be advertised with a minimum area of consideration of “ICTAP eligibles only,” for a period of five business days.

**REFERENCES:** Memorandum on Career Transition for Federal Employees, dated September 12, 1995; Title 5, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 330, “Recruitment, Selection, and Placement (General)”; Delegated Examining Unit Handbook; Department of Commerce Career Transition Assistance Plan

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DOC Employee CTAP Eligibility List

Name	Position Title	Series	Grade	Duty Station	Servicing HRM	CTAP Expiration Date	Qualification Analysis



**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
CAREER TRANSITION ASSISTANCE PLAN (CTAP)/ INTERAGENCY  
CAREER TRANSITION ASSISTANCE PLAN (ICTAP)**

The provisions of the Department of Commerce (Department) CTAP/ICTAP Plan are effective upon release and apply uniformly across the Department to all surplus and displaced employees, including those in the excepted service, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Corps, the Foreign Service, and pertain to all Department competitive service vacancies.

Components of the Department include the following:

- Bureau of Industry and Security;
- Economics and Statistics Administration (including the Bureau of the Census and the Bureau of Economic Analysis);
- Economic Development Administration;
- International Trade Administration;
- Minority Business Development Agency;
- National Institute of Standards and Technology;
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration;
- National Technical Information Service;
- National Telecommunications and Information Administration;
- Office of the Secretary;
- Office of Inspector General; and
- Patent and Trademark Office.

The Plan supplements Title 5, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 330, "Recruitment, Selection, and Placement (General)"; Subpart A, "Discretion in Filling Vacancies"; Subpart F, "Agency Career Transition Assistance Plans (CTAP) for Local Surplus and Displaced Employees"; and Subpart G, "Interagency Career Transition Assistance Plan for Displaced Employees."

**Section I: General Provisions**

Each Servicing Human Resources Office (SHRO) will designate a coordinator for the Plan, to serve as a central point of contact for staff of the Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM).

**Coverage and Restrictions**

CTAP/ICTAP policies apply to the following:

- "Displaced" employees, as defined in Title 5, CFR §§ 330.604(c) and 330.703(b).
- "Surplus" employees, as defined in Title 5, CFR § 330.604(i).

**Eligibility for Special Selection Priority**

CTAP: Eligibility for CTAP begins on the date the agency issues either a Reduction in Force (RIF) separation notice or a certificate of expected separation, notice of proposed removal for declining a

directed reassignment or transfer of function outside of the local commuting area, or other official certification indicating that the position is surplus.

ICTAP: Eligibility for ICTAP begins on the date the agency issues a RIF separation notice; on the date the agency issues a formal notice of proposed separation to an employee for declining a transfer of function or directed reassignment outside the local commuting area, or other reasons specified in Title 5, CFR 330.704(b).

### *Well-Qualified Applicants*

Eligible applicants who are well-qualified must receive priority consideration for selection. “Well-qualified” for job purposes includes those candidates who have been determined to exceed minimum qualifications for the position by attaining at least a rating of 85 but otherwise may or may not be among the highly or best-qualified candidates. CTAP/ICTAP candidates referred for priority consideration must be well-qualified and able to perform the duties of the position.

CTAP: To be eligible for special selection priority, an individual must meet all of the following conditions:

- Be a surplus or displaced employee;
- Have a current performance rating of at least fully successful or equivalent;
- Apply for a vacancy that is at or below the grade level from which the employee may be or is being separated that does not have a greater promotion potential than the position from which the employee may be or is being separated;
- Occupy a position in the same local commuting area of the vacancy or at the bureau’s discretion, or occupy a position beyond the local commuting area;
- File an application for a specific vacancy within the time frame established and provide proof of eligibility; and
- Be determined to be well-qualified.

ICTAP: To be eligible for special selection priority, an individual must meet all of the following conditions:

- Be a displaced employee;
- Have a current performance rating of at least fully successful or equivalent;
- Apply for a vacancy that is at or below the grade level from which the employee has been or is being separated, that does not have a great promotion potential than the position from which the employee has been or is being separated;
- Occupy or be displaced from a position in the same local commuting area of the vacancy;
- File an application for a specific vacancy within the time frame established and provide proof of eligibility; and
- Be determined to be well-qualified.

### **Proof of Eligibility for CTAP AND ICTAP**

CTAP and ICTAP applicants must submit all of the required documents requested in the vacancy announcements such as:

- A copy of the RIF notice or written notice of expected separation, or other documentation of priority consideration status;
- A copy of the applicant's latest SF-50 noting current position, grade level, and duty location;
- A copy of the applicant's last performance appraisal; and
- Any documentation that shows his/her current promotion potential.

## **Section II: Priority Consideration and Selection**

CTAP and ICTAP applicants must be considered for competitive service and excepted service vacancies before screening other applicants under merit promotion procedures or competitive procedures as applicable. CTAP and ICTAP eligible candidates must apply by the closing date of the vacancy announcement.

- Consideration of applications *other* than CTAP eligibles will be suspended under merit promotion procedures upon receipt of an application from a CTAP eligible employee until a determination is made on selecting the CTAP eligible.
- Consideration of applications *other* than ICTAP eligibles will be suspended under competitive examining procedures upon receipt of an application from a ICTAP eligible until a determination is made on selecting the ICTAP eligible.
- As per Title 5, CFR, Part 300, Subpart E, bureaus may not procure temporary help services in lieu of appointing a surplus or displaced Federal employee eligible for placement under CTAP or ICTAP.
- Placement actions exempt from requirements of CTAP/ICTAP are specified in Title 5, CFR §§ 330.606(d) and 330.705(c), respectively.

### *Reemployment Priority List (RPL)*

The Department will maintain an RPL for each commuting area to provide reemployment consideration to its former competitive service employees separate by reduction in force or who are fully recovered from a compensable injury after more than 1 year. When filling a permanent or temporary vacancy from outside of its workforce, an individual on the RPL must be selected prior to other candidates unless appointing an individual with a qualified 10 point preference eligible or other qualifying individuals under Title 5, CFR § 330.205(b)(2).

### **Order of Selection for Vacancies**

In accordance with Title 5, CFR § 330.606, the order of selection for filling vacancies from within the agency is as follows:

1. Surplus or displaced employees of the Departmental operating unit/secretarial office in the local commuting area (**mandatory selection**);
2. Surplus or displaced employees of *other* Departmental operating units in the local commuting area (**mandatory selection**);
3. Surplus or displaced Department employees from other geographic areas (**discretionary selection**);
4. Non-surplus or displaced Department employees (**discretionary selection**).

Before selection of a surplus or displaced employee is made, the SHRO must confirm with the employee's servicing HR office, if applicable, that he/she is eligible for priority selection at that time. Selection of any non-CTAP eligible applicant when one or more well-qualified CTAP-eligible applicants are available must be approved in advance. Approval must be from the SHRO manager and cannot be re-delegated.

In accordance with Title 5, CFR § 330.705, the order of selection for filling vacancies from outside the agency is as follows:

1. Employees on RPL for the local commuting area (**mandatory selection**);
2. Former employees displaced from the Department in the local commuting area (**mandatory selection**).
3. Former employees displaced from the Department from other geographic areas (**discretionary selection**);
4. Displaced employees from other Federal agencies in the local commuting area (**mandatory selection**);
5. Displaced employees from the District of Columbia Department of Corrections (**mandatory selection**);
6. Displaced Panama Canal Zone employees (**mandatory selection**);
7. Other non-Department merit promotion applicants (**discretionary selection**).

### **Notification of Vacancies**

- All vacancy announcements must be entered into USAJOBS. The vacancy announcements must contain information on how eligible employees can apply, what proof of eligibility is required, and the criteria for meeting the definition of well-qualified.
- Temporary and term appointments may be extended if the original announcement was open to CTAP and/or ICTAP candidates and clearly stated that the appointment might be extended.

### **Notice to Applicants**

- SHROs must notify eligible applicants of the results of their applications.
- When an otherwise eligible applicant is determined not to be well-qualified, a second review is to be conducted by the SHRO Manager and documented.
- The written notice to the applicant must include the results of the second review.

### **Setting Pay**

Unless the individual is already on grade or pay retention at the time of eligibility, he/she is not entitled to grade or pay retention if he/she accepts a position at a lower grade level. However, the application of highest previous rate is encouraged where otherwise consistent with bureau practices.

### **Termination of CTAP/ICTAP Eligibility**

Under the provisions of Title 5, CFR §§ 330.605(c) and 330.704(c):

CTAP: Eligibility expires on the employee's separation date; when the action causing the displacement is canceled; when the employee receives a permanent Federal position (in the



competitive or excepted service) in any agency, at any grade level; when the employee declines a permanent position (in the competitive or excepted service) within the Department for which the employee applied and was rated well-qualified; or for other reasons as designated under Title 5, CFR 330.605(c).

ICTAP: Eligibility expires 1 year after separation; when the action causing the eligibility is canceled; when the employee receives a permanent Federal position (in the competitive or excepted service) in any agency, at any grade level; when the employee declines a permanent position (in the competitive or excepted service) within any agency for which the employee applied and was rated well-qualified; when the employee fails to respond within a reasonable period of time to an offer or official inquiry of availability; or for other reasons as designated under Title 5, CFR 330.704(c).

### **Section III: Career Transition Services and Facilities**

Within the Department, a variety of career transition services will be made available to its surplus and displaced employees, including those in the excepted service, and the Senior Executive Service. The nature and extent of such assistance depends upon the extent of downsizing or restructuring anticipated or being experienced by the bureau.

The following list is not all-inclusive but includes the minimum types of services to be provided by the SHRO and/or bureaus with CTAP and ICTAP eligibles, until the time of separation:

- SHROs must conduct orientation sessions for surplus or displaced employees within their serviced area on the use of career transition services, eligibility requirements for special section priority under CTAP and ICTAP; and how to apply for vacancies under CTAP and ICTAP;
- SHROs must provide managers, supervisors, and union representative (if applicable) information on the types of services available to their surplus and displaced employees;
- Bureaus must allow the use of office equipment (e.g., fax machines, copy machines, computers, internet) for surplus and displaced employees, while still employed, to prepare resumes and applications, and to access job vacancy databases (e.g., USAJOBS, Monster.gov);
- Bureaus must provide access to resource information on other forms of Federal, state, and local assistance which are available to support career transition for employees with disabilities;
- Bureaus must provide access by employees, including those with disabilities, to services in headquarters, field offices, and remote site locations;
- Bureaus must make available the Employee Assistance Program; and
- Bureaus must provide retraining opportunities to employees if possible.

Note: Regulations on training/retraining issued by the Office of Personnel Management and the Department of Labor will be applicable.

#### *Excused Absences*

Supervisors will allow surplus and displaced employees excused absences for the following: to interview for jobs; to obtain necessary documentation (e.g., from the Department of Veterans Affairs); to receive pertinent training; or to perform other activities preliminary to securing other employment or other reasons pertaining to career transition. Supervisors may also approve excused absences and support the training and counseling for surplus and displaced employees on transition issues, as is appropriate to the situation. Each instance of excused absence must be requested by the employee and

is subject to approval by his/her supervisor. The length of each excused absence will be determined by the supervisor on a case-by-case basis, considering workload requirements; budgetary constraints; consistency with other organizations within the bureau; the nature of the activity; distance (when the activity requires the employee to travel away from the worksite); and equity (with other employees).

#### *Use of Services/Facilities after Separation*

The bureau shall provide as much access to career transition services as possible for eligible employees for up to 1 year from the date of separation. Services could include:

- Access to the same transition services provided to employed eligibles when provided by a non-Federal vendor.
- Access to facilities and the use of government equipment to search for jobs, apply for jobs, prepare resumes, etc. Note: This should be provided in rare cases and only when there is reasonable knowledge that the employee would not have access to similar equipment otherwise.
- Access to the Employee Assistance Program.