



PERSONNEL AND
READINESS

UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
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AUG 13 2025

**MEMORANDUM FOR DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT
ASSISTANT SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS
FOR MANPOWER AND RESERVE AFFAIRS**

SUBJECT: Implementation of Executive Order 14170, "Reforming the Federal Hiring Process and Restoring Merit to Government Service"

References: (a) Executive Order 14170, "Reforming the Federal Hiring Process and Restoring Merit to Government Service," January 20, 2025
(b) Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy and Office of Personnel Management Memorandum, "Merit Hiring Plan," May 29, 2025
(c) Executive Order 13932, "Modernizing and Reforming the Assessment and Hiring of Federal Job Candidates," June 26, 2020

This memorandum directs implementation of key reforms outlined in references (a) and (b). These immediate actions and long-term requirements are critical to reinforcing a merit-based hiring system and ensuring full compliance with civil service principles and Federal law.

Ending Unlawful Discrimination in Hiring

All DoD Components must cease use of any "diversity, equity, and inclusion" (DEI) framework within its hiring, recruitment, training, interview, professional development, internship, fellowship, promotion, or retention practices and any Special Emphasis Programs. All personnel actions and employment programs must be firmly grounded in merit system principles, free from discrimination or preferential treatment on the basis of race, sex, color, religion, and/or national origin.

Supervisors and hiring officials are reminded that the use of any unlawful discrimination or preferential treatment in hiring and related personnel decisions is strictly prohibited. Management officials are responsible for ensuring the integrity of the hiring process. Individuals found to have engaged in, or condoned, unlawful discrimination or preferential treatment will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

Establishing DoD Talent Teams

The Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Civilian Personnel Policy (DASD(CPP)) will head DoD's Talent Team. DoD Components are requested to establish Talent Teams at the DoD Component level, with a minimum of one Talent Team per DoD Component that will report to the DASD(CPP) or designee. DoD Components may choose to establish more than one Talent Team based on their organizational structure, including USA Staffing Office structure, and/or based on their hiring needs. These Talent Teams will be responsible for operationalizing

reforms in alignment with reference (b) and must have active support from their respective DoD Component leadership. In support of this effort, each Talent Team must include a Delegated Examining (DE)-certified Talent Pool Manager (TPM) and a Shared Certificate Coordinator (SCC). These roles are essential to improving hiring quality, maintaining compliance, and streamlining hiring actions and efforts to inform Federal recruitment strategy focused on early career; science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM); and veterans hiring.

DoD Components will have 10 business days from the date of this memorandum to identify Talent Teams, TPMs, and SCCs. When identifying Talent Teams, DoD Components should indicate the number of Talent Teams they will establish, i.e. one single Talent Team at the DoD Component level, or multiple Talent Teams in line with USA Staffing Office structure. At a minimum, a point of contact must be provided for both the TPM and SCC roles for each established Talent Team. DoD Components can elect to include a backup point of contact for these roles. All Talent Team information, as well as TPM and SCC names and contact information, should be submitted via email to dodhra.dcpas.mbx.merit-hiring-plan-communications@mail.mil.

Focusing on Human Resources Best Practices

Consistent with reference (b), DoD Components are also directed to maintain current, accessible lists of qualified veterans and military spouses eligible for non-competitive hiring consideration. These lists should be readily available and used as part of expedited hiring strategies, in keeping with the Department's ongoing commitment to support those who have served.

The Department is required to report to the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) on current and actionable recruitment plans specifically addressing efforts to attract and hire early career talent, individuals for positions in STEM, and veterans. Such plans must be updated and reported on a quarterly basis and will require DoD Component input for consolidation and transmission to OPM. More guidance regarding specific reporting requirements and timelines will be provided by the DASD(CPP).

Phasing Out Self-Assessments and Minimizing Reliance on Education Credentials

The Department is eliminating the use of self-assessments as the sole means of candidate evaluation, with limited exceptions. Unless a position is seasonal or at the GS-01 through GS-04 level (or equivalent), job announcements must include at least one additional technical or structured assessment prior to the issuance of any certificate of eligibles. This could include structured interviews, job knowledge tests, or work samples, among other approved methods. All job announcements must clearly describe the assessment tools that will be used. Appendix A of the Department of Defense Hiring and Assessment Guide ([https://www.dcpas.osd.mil/sites/default/files/2024-11/DoD Hiring Assessment and Selection Guide November 2024 Update.pdf](https://www.dcpas.osd.mil/sites/default/files/2024-11/DoD_Hiring_Assessment_and_Selection_Guide_November_2024_Update.pdf)) provides a list of assessment options that are available for use.

Reference (c) directed OPM to realign Federal hiring to a skills-based system by updating and integrating classification, qualifications and assessment practices and policy, and to remove any unnecessary degree requirements. To this end, Agencies are required to revamp position descriptions so that they delineate eligibility and qualification criteria and eliminate any requirements that are not relevant, such as degree requirements. DoD Components are also strongly encouraged to leverage the flexibilities outlined in OPM's General Schedule Qualifications Operating Manual (<https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/classification-qualifications/general-schedule-qualification-policies/#url=General-Policies>) to attract, assess, and hire top talent more efficiently.

DoD Components also must ensure compliance with applicable collective bargaining obligations.

Resources and Guides

Resources and guides on Talent Teams, TPMs, and DoD Pooled and Shared Hiring Program Strategies and Tools may be found at the following links:

- New Talent Pools (Shared Certs) Feature for USAJOBS' Agency Talent Portal (<https://www.chcoc.gov/content/new-talent-pools-shared-certs-feature-usajobs%E2%80%99-agency-talent-portal>)
- USA Staffing Advisory Board Resource Center (<https://resourcecenter.usastaffing.gov/hc/en-us/categories/32525695444884-Resources>)

These actions implementing references (a) and (b) require immediate attention. For assistance concerning these requirements, please contact dodhra.dcpas.mbx.merit-hiring-plan-communications@mail.mil.



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