

DIRECT HIRE AUTHORITY (DHA) FOR CERTAIN PERSONNEL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF WAR (DOW) WORKFORCE

Section 1109 of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 granted temporary DHA for certain positions in the competitive service to the Secretary of War. Section 1117 of the NDAA for FY 2021 and sections 1104 and 1250B of the NDAA for FY 2024 expanded the covered categories. The Under Secretary of War for Personnel and Readiness (USW(P&R)) Memorandum, “Updated Procedures for Using the Direct Hire Authority for Certain Personnel of the Department of War,” dated December 19, 2025, provides updated guidance and implementation procedures on the use of this DHA. These FAQs may be referenced in conjunction with those procedures and applicable DoW Component Headquarters and field-level guidance.

GENERAL

Q1: What types of appointments are covered under these authorities?

A1: This authority may be used for permanent, term, or temporary appointments of qualified candidates to positions in the competitive service. Appointments under this authority may not be made after September 30, 2030, except for positions covered by Paragraph 3.e. of the USW (P&R) memorandum, for which the authority does not expire.

Q2: Is public notice required?

A2: No, public notice is not required. Merit factors shall be the basis for selecting individuals for positions.

Q3: Does this authority place any time limitations on appointments?

A3: No, there are no time limitations on appointments made under this authority.

Q4: Does this authority have any allocation limitations?

A4: No, there are no allocation limitations under this authority.

Q5: Does this authority require retired members of the armed forces to wait 180 days prior to appointment, as described in title 5 United States Code (USC) § 3326, subchapter I?

A5: No, there is no requirement to apply 5 USC § 3326, subchapter I for appointments made under this authority.

Q6: Does this authority waive maximum-age entrance requirements?

A6: No, maximum-age entrance requirements per 5 USC § 3307 apply to appointments made under this authority.

Q7: How to code a personnel action (Standard Form 52) when using this DHA?

A7: (1) Utilize the Office of Personnel Management’s (OPM) Guide to Processing Personnel Actions (GPPA) to determine the appointment type, nature of action (NOA) code, and nature of action.

Example: Table 9-B of the GPPA provides a table for appointments based on the use of a Direct Hire Recruiting Authority

(2) The legal authority codes cannot be found in the GPPA because this DHA is a DoW authority only; it cannot be used government-wide.

- (3) For the purposes of appointments made by the DoW Inspector General for positions in support of Operation Atlantic Resolve, use Legal Authority Code/Legal Authority: Z5CAU: Direct-Hire Auth (IG-Operation Atlantic Resolve), PL118-31, Sec1250B, 12/22/2023
- (4) For all other purposes use Legal Authority Code/Legal Authority: Z5CAV/Direct-Hire Auth (Certain DoW Personnel), PL 118-31, Sec 1250B(i)(2), 12/22/2023

COVERAGE

Q8: Which DoW Components or organizations can use this authority?

A8: This authority applies to the Office of the Secretary of War, the Military Departments, the Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Joint Staff, the Combatant Commands, the Office of the Inspector General of the Department of War, the Defense Agencies, the DoW Field Activities, and all other organizational entities within the DoW.

Q9: Who designates the occupational specialties for which this DHA may be used?

A9: DoW Component hiring officials have the authority to identify the critical hiring needs for which they may use this authority.

PREFERENCE

Q10: Does Veterans' Preference apply to this DHA?

A10: No, veterans' preference does not apply when selecting individuals under this DHA. 5 USC § 9905 authorizes the Secretary of War to non-competitively appoint qualified candidates to certain positions in the competitive service without regard to chapter 33, subchapter I of 5 USC, other than §§ 3303 and 3328.

Q11: Are positions filled by this authority subject to the Priority Placement Program?

A11: Yes, appointments under this authority are subject to modified procedures outlined in the Priority Placement Program (PPP) Handbook, Chapter 4, Appendix B, dated October 2023, which incorporates the information listed in the Deputy Assistant Secretary of War (Civilian Personnel Policy) memorandum, "Modified Priority Placement Program Procedures for Positions Filled Through the National Defense Authorization Act Direct-Hire Authorities," dated July 17, 2017.

Q12: Does this authority require Interagency Career Transition Assistance Plan (ICTAP) and Reemployment Priority List (RPL) clearance?

A12: No, this authority does not require clearance of displaced employee programs in accordance with title 5, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 330 subparts B, F, and G.

OTHER

Q13: Does the restriction on movement after competitive appointment (5 CFR § 330.502) apply to this authority?

A13: Yes, the restriction on movement following competitive appointment applies for the first 90 days.

Q14: Where can I find a listing of Major Range and Test Facilities Base (MRTFB) Activities?

A14: Approved MRTFB Activities can be found in the Department of Defense Directive 3200.11, dated December 27, 2007, [DoDD 3200.11, December 27, 2007, Incorporating Change 2, October 15, 2018 \(whs.mil\)](#).

Q15: Do DoW Components need to develop their own implementing guidance?

A15: No, however, DoW Components may develop their own implementing guidance and procedures to address specific requirements. Component guidance may be more restrictive than the implementation guidance, but cannot broaden the scope of the authority.

Q16: Who can provide additional information and assistance on this DHA?

A16: Hiring managers should consult with their human resources (HR) specialist regarding use of this DHA. HR specialists may consult with their Component headquarters HR policy office. Inquiries may be submitted to the Defense Civilian Personnel Advisory Service at: dodhra.mc-alex.dcpas.list.ec-policy@mail.mil.