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[Home](#) > Announcing Government-wide Direct Hire Appointing Authorities

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Thursday, October 11, 2018



The Director

UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

Washington, DC 20415

MEMORANDUM FOR: HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

From: MARGARET M. WEICHERT, ACTING DIRECTOR

Subject: Announcing Government-wide Direct Hire Appointing Authorities

The President's Management Agenda (PMA) sets forth a long-term vision for effective government on behalf of the American people. It identifies "workforce for the 21st century" as a key driver of transformation, with particular emphasis on implementing a variety of improved workforce strategies, including enabling simple and strategic hiring to attract top talent. As the broader actions of the PMA progress, we are also looking at maximizing the use of currently available tools and authorities to help address some of our most pressing hiring needs.

I am pleased to announce that the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) is authorizing new direct hire appointing authorities for a variety of Scientific, Technical, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) positions, as well as Cybersecurity and related positions where we have identified severe shortages of candidates and/or critical hiring needs*.

Covered Positions – Scientific, Technical, Engineering, Mathematics (STEM)

Position Title	Occupational Series	Grade Levels
Economist	GS-0110	11-15
Biological Science	GS-0401	11-15
Fishery Biologist	GS-0482	11-15
General Engineer	GS-0801	11-15
Civil Engineer	GS-0810	11-15

Physical Sciences	GS-1301, 1306, 1310, 1320 only	11-15
Actuary	GS-1510	11-15
Mathematics	GS-1520	11-15
Mathematical Statistician and Statistician	GS-1529, 1530	11-15
Acquisitions	GS-1102	11-15

Covered Positions – Cybersecurity and Related

Position Title	Occupational Series	Grade Levels
Computer Engineers (Cybersecurity)	GS-0854	12-15
Computer Scientists (Cybersecurity)	GS-1550	12-15
Electronics Engineers (Cybersecurity)	GS-0855	12-15
IT Cybersecurity Specialist**	GS-2210	12-15

***These positions must require IT knowledge and IT competencies, the work must be coded to include cybersecurity functions as supported by the job codes in the [Guide to Data Standards](#) and the [NICE Cybersecurity Workforce Framework, 2017](#), and the cybersecurity work must be performed the majority of the time.*

Using these Direct-Hire Authorities

Effective immediately agencies may appoint individuals into the occupations identified above at the specified grade levels (or equivalent) nationwide. Individuals may be appointed to competitive service career, career-conditional, term, or temporary positions, as appropriate, without regard to provisions of 5 U.S.C. 3309-3318 or 5 CFR part 211 and part 337, subpart A. These appointments are subject to public notice requirements in 5 U.S.C. 3327 and 3330 and 5 CFR 330, as well as procedures in 5 CFR part 330 pertaining to candidates' eligible for priority selection, and requirements in 5 CFR 332.402. Agencies must comply with all relevant laws to the extent that the agency or component is not exempted from such laws pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3304(a)(3).

In accordance with 5 CFR 337.206(c), OPM may request information from agencies on their use of these direct hire authorities. OPM will periodically assess agency use of these authorities as well as the continued need for them, and may modify or terminate them as appropriate.

Agencies are required to request an applicable pre-employment background investigation at the appropriate tier to establish whether candidates are suitable for Federal employment, may be credentialed in accordance with Government-wide credentialing standards and can hold a position that is national security sensitive (including but not limited to those requiring eligibility for access to classified information) at the appropriate level (if required for the particular position).

Agencies must identify and use proper assessment tools for the positions being filled with these direct hire authorities to determine who is qualified for the covered positions. Agencies should not conduct additional rating to determine relative degrees of qualifications when using this authority. Agencies should assess applicants in the order in which the applications were received, and select any qualified applicant in an order that approximates order of receipt. Qualified candidates with veterans' preference should be selected as they are found, just as any qualified non-preference eligible candidate would be.

Documenting Appointments on the SF-50 “Notification of Personnel Action”

When using a Government-wide authority, an agency must enter the authority code “**AYM**” on the SF-50 in item 5-C **and** the relevant secondary authority code specified below for item 5-E of the SF-50.

STEM positions:

Authority code to be cited: **BAH: GW-007**

This authority expires 5 years from the date of approval.

Cybersecurity and related positions:

Authority code to be cited: **BAI: GW-008**

This authority may be used indefinitely or until OPM terminates this authority.

If you have any questions, please email Darlene.Phelps@opm.gov.

cc: Chief Human Capital Officers

*OPM has documented its findings in relation to these positions in its files and will maintain the documentation for the duration of the authorities.