

Veterans Recruitment Program



U.S. Department of Transportation

The purpose of this brochure is to provide information on hiring flexibilities and types of Veterans' preference with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Research, Education, and Economics Mission Area. More details on hiring flexibilities and Veterans' preferences can be found at www.opm.gov/staffingportal/vetguide/asp.

Veterans may be hired under the following three Appointing Authorities:

- Veterans' Recruitment Appointment (VRA)
- 30 Percent or More Disabled Veterans
- Veterans Employment Opportunities Act of 1998 (VEOA)

Veterans' Recruitment Appointment (VRA) (Formerly, Veterans' Readjustment Appointment)

What it provides: VRA allows appointment of eligible veterans up to the GS-11 grade level or equivalent. Veterans are hired under excepted appointments to positions that are otherwise in the competitive service. After the individual satisfactorily completes 2 years of service, the veteran must be converted noncompetitively to a career or career-conditional appointment. Agencies can also use VRA to fill temporary (not to exceed 1 year) or term (more than 1 year but not to exceed 4 years) positions. If you are employed in a temporary or term position under VRA, you will not be converted to the competitive service after 2 years.

When to use it: VRA can be a good tool for filling entry-level to mid-level positions and there is no limit to the number of times you can apply under VRA.

Who is eligible: VRA eligibility applies to the following categories:

- Disabled veterans;
- Veterans who served on active duty in the Armed Forces during a war declared by Congress, or in a campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge has been authorized;
- Veterans who, while serving on active duty in the Armed Forces, participated in a military operation for which the Armed Forces Service Medal was awarded; and
- Veterans separated from active duty within 3 years.



U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Desiree N. Palacios

30 Percent or More Disabled Veterans

What it provides: This authority enables a hiring manager to appoint an eligible candidate to any position for which he or she is qualified, without competition. Unlike the VRA, there is no grade-level limitation. Initial appointments are time-limited, lasting more than 60 days; however, you may noncompetitively convert the individual to permanent status at any time during the time-limited appointment.

When to use it: This authority is a good tool for filling positions at any grade level quickly.

Who is eligible: Eligibility applies to the following categories:

- Disabled veterans who were retired from active military service with a disability rating of 30 percent or more; and
- Disabled veterans rated by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) (within the preceding year) as having a compensable service-connected disability of 30 percent or more.

Veterans Employment Opportunities Act of 1998 (VEOA)

What it provides: This flexibility gives eligible veterans access to jobs that otherwise only would have been available to status employees. In VEOA appointments, veterans are not accorded preference as a factor, but they are allowed to compete for job opportunities that are not offered to other external candidates. A VEOA eligible who is selected will be given a career or career-conditional appointment.

When to use it: Agencies may appoint VEOA eligibles who have competed under agency merit promotion announcements when they are recruiting from outside their workforce.

Who is eligible: Eligibility applies to the following categories:

- Preference eligibles (defined in title 5 U.S.C. 2108(3)).
- Service personnel separated after 3 or more years of continuous active service performed under honorable conditions.



Types of Veterans Preference



DOD, US Army

To receive preference, a veteran must have been discharged or released from active duty in the Armed Forces under honorable conditions (i.e., with an honorable or general discharge). As defined in 5 U.S.C. 2101(2), “Armed Forces” means the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps and Coast Guard. The veteran must also be eligible under one of the preference categories below.

Military retirees at the rank of major, lieutenant commander, or higher are not eligible for preference in appointment unless they are disabled veterans. (This does not apply to Reservists who will not begin drawing military retired pay until age 60.)

For non-disabled users, active duty for training by National Guard or Reserve soldiers does not qualify as “active duty” for preference.

For disabled veterans, active duty includes training service in the Reserves or National Guard, per the Merit Systems Protection Board decision in *Hesse v. Department of the Army*, 104 M.S.P.R.647(2007).

For purposes of this chapter and 5 U.S.C. 2108, “war” means only those armed conflicts declared by Congress as war and includes World War II, which covers the period from December 7, 1941, to April 28, 1952.

When applying for Federal jobs, eligible veterans should claim preference on their application or resume. Applicants claiming 10-point preference must complete Standard Form (SF) 15, Application for 10-Point Veteran Preference, and submit the requested documentation.

Here are the preference categories:

5-Point Preference (TP)

Five points are added to the **passing** examination score or rating of a veteran who served during a war or specified periods according to the VetGuide that can be found at www.opm.gov/staffingportal.vetguide.asp.

10-Point Compensable Disability Preference (CP)

Ten points are added to the **passing** examination score or rating of a veteran who served at any time and who has a compensable service-connected disability rating of at least 10 percent but less than 30 percent.

10-point 30 Percent Compensable Disability Preference (CPS)

Ten points are added to the **passing** examination score or rating of a veteran who served at any time and who has a compensable service-connected disability rating of 30 percent or more.

10-Point Disability Preference (XP)

Ten points are added to the **passing** examination score or rating of a veteran who served at any time and has a present service-connected disability or is receiving compensation, disability retirement benefits, or pension from the military or the Department of Veterans Affairs but does not qualify as a CP or CPS; or a veteran who received a Purple Heart.

10-Point Derived Preference (XP)

Ten points are added to the **passing** examination score or rating of spouses, widows, widowers, or mothers of veterans. This type of preference is usually referred to as “derived preference” because it is based on service of a veteran who is not able to use the preference.

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March 2013



United States Department of Agriculture

Research, Education and Economics
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