



**Tips & Tidbits**  
**Issue #: 12-2008**



**15 December 2008**

**Question: How may an Agency set the rate of basic pay of a newly appointed/selected General Schedule employee above the minimum rate of the grade of the position?**

An agency may contemplate a request for pay rates above the minimum step of the grade based on the superior qualifications of the selectee and/or the special needs of the activity/organization. This superior qualification appointment, commonly referred to as advanced in-hire, may be used for selectees either in a permanent or temporary appointment status when their selection is as:

- (1) A first appointment in the Federal service; or
- (2) A reappointment which is considered a new appointment if it meets the following conditions:
  - (a) The employee has had a break in service of at least 90 days; or
  - (b) a reappointment without requiring a 90 day break in service if the candidate's civilian employment with the Federal Government during the 90 day period immediately preceding the appointment was limited to one or more of the following: employment under a time limited or non-permanent appointment in the competitive or excepted service; employment under an appointment as an expert or consultant; or employment under a provisional appointment.

When superior qualifications precipitate a candidate's selection as an advanced in-hire employee, it must be ascertained that the candidate does indeed have superior qualifications. Accordingly, this determination must be based on the level, type or quality of the candidate's skills or competencies obtained through experience and/or education. Moreover, these skills, competencies, experience, education, and accomplishments must be relevant to the requirements of the position to be filled, and must be significantly higher than that needed to be minimally required for the position and/or be of a more specialized quality compared to other candidates.

Conversely when special activity/organization needs are the precursor to the selection of the advanced in-hire candidate, it must be determined that the type, level, or quality of skills and competencies or other qualities and experiences possessed by the candidate are relevant to the requirements of the position and are essential to

accomplishment of an important agency mission, goal, or program activity. A candidate may also meet the special needs criteria by meeting agency workforce needs, as documented in the agency's strategic human capital plan.

The use of the superior qualifications appointment is discretionary; however, recruitment incentives must first be considered before determining whether to use this authority.

Requests for advanced in-hire rates are normally worked with the assistance of Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC) staff to ensure compliance with related policies, and must be made in writing, reviewed *and* approved by the appropriate agency official **before** the candidate enters on duty. Appropriate MACOM guidelines and evaluation procedures must be also followed.

Approving officials must document each determination sufficiently to allow the reconstruction of the action taken, including a description of the:

- (1) The superior qualifications of the candidate or the special agency need for the candidate's services which justifies a higher than minimum rate;
- (2) Explanation of factor(s) and documentation used to justify the rate at which the employee's pay is set. The written documentation must explain how the factors directly relate to the rate approved; and,
- (3) Reasons for authorizing a higher than minimum rate instead of or in addition to a recruitment incentive.

For additional information, please contact your servicing HR Specialist.

*BLANCHE D. ROBINSON*  
*Human Resources Officer*  
*Fort Benning CPAC*  
*Phone: 545-1203 (Coml.); 835-1203 (DSN)*  
*E-Mail:*  
[\*blanche.d.robinson@us.army.mil\*](mailto:blanche.d.robinson@us.army.mil)