



**Tips and Tidbits**  
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**Question: What is Direct Hire Authority (DHA)? What type positions are covered under this Authority and under what circumstances can it be used?**

Direct Hire Authority is a special appointing authority granted by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) that provides Federal agencies authorization to fill specific vacancies when triggered by a national emergency; threat or potential threat; environmental disaster; or when a critical hiring need or severe shortage of candidates exists for a particular series and grade. Direct hire authority streamlines the recruitment process and permits an agency to hire, after public notice is given, any qualified applicant without regard to 5 U.S.C. 3309-3318, 5 CFR part 211, or 5 CFR part 337, subpart A [which speaks to OPM dictated requirements which are addressed within this document].

There are two applications of Direct Hire Authority; OPM Government-wide and that authorized by section 8079 of the Department of Defense (DoD) Appropriation Act.

The use of Government wide DHA as authorized through OPM covers medical occupations (Diagnostic Radiologic Technologist, Medical Officer, Nurse, Practical Nurse, and Pharmacists); Information Technology Management (Information Security) GS-9 or appropriate band level and above in support of efforts to carry out requirements of government information Security Reform Act and the Federal Information Security Management Act; and, Iraq Reconstruction Effort positions – these are positions that require fluency in Arabic or other middle eastern languages at grades FWS/GS-9 or appropriate band level and above (U.S. Citizens).

DHA under the auspices of the DoD Appropriation Act covers the following healthcare occupations: audiologists/speech pathologists, chiropractors, dental assistants, dental hygienists, dental laboratory technicians, dentists, dietitians, dietitian/nutritionists, industrial technicians, licensed practical nurses, nursing assistants, occupational therapists, optometrists, orthotics /prosthetics, pharmacists, physical therapists, physician assistants, physicians, podiatrists, psychologists, psychology technicians, registered nurses, respiratory therapists, social service assistants, and social workers.

The most common use of DHA is in the fill of medical positions supporting our soldiers, their families, and the civilian workforce. Accordingly, the Department of the Army has established a Recruitment Center, commonly known as the "MEDCELL" as a means of accepting applications from the public. Applicants interested in being a part of the Army Civilian workforce in support of the Army Medical Career field, may visit the MEDCELL webpage at <http://medcell.army.mil/index.htm> . The link provides information on current job opportunities that are available in the medical field at a variety of locations, as well as instructions on how to submit application materials, benefits, and contact information for any questions regarding the information contained in the website.

Direct Hire Authority does not require applicants be "rated or ranked" or appointed with regards to the "rule of three". Further it does not dictate veterans' preference consideration. DHA *does* require adherence to career transition assistance program requirements (CTAP/ICTAP); that all vacancies be announced in compliance with public notice requirements; compliance with displaced employee procedures; and, perhaps most importantly, applicants meet OPM qualification standards.

In addition to qualification requirements, the individual selected must also meet all age, citizenship, and physical requirements; conditions of employment; licensure and/or certification stipulations, and suitability requirements. Selectees are then appointed into the competitive service and must complete a 1-year probationary period.

Questions regarding Direct Hire Authority should be addressed with your servicing Human Resources Specialist.

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