



Tips and Tidbits
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Question: How does the DoD Priority Placement Program (PPP) affect the fill of vacant positions?

The DoD Priority Placement Program (PPP) is the primary tool used for registration and placement of DoD employees who are entitled to placement assistance as a result of being adversely affected by actions such as, but not limited to, base closure, reduction-in-force (RIF), and transfer of function. With all of the downsizing and restructuring taking place within the Federal Government, the DoD Priority Placement Program is a great avenue for employees to continue their employment and for managers to fill vacant positions. Even though often viewed as an employee benefit program, managers also benefit by retaining skilled employees; maintaining productivity; reducing costs; and, being in compliance with statutory requirements.

The PPP operates through the Automated Stopper and Referral System (ASARS) which is an automated registration and referral program that matches registrants to vacancies. All civilian appropriated fund positions (except positions in the Senior Executive Service (SES) or equivalent senior positions), are subject to the PPP unless one of the exceptions, as outlined in [Chapter 4, Para C](#) of the DoD PPP Operations Manual, is met. There are a total of 11 subprograms within the PPP; however, the most common known to managers and employees are the following:

Program A: This Program is for employees adversely affected by RIF, transfer of function, or displacement due to overseas tour expiration. Employees registered in this Program are assigned a referral priority of 1, 2, or 3 depending on the severity of the personnel action that serves as the basis for registration eligibility. Priority 1 pertains to employees who are facing separation or who will be furloughed for 6 months or longer due to a RIF, base closure, or transfer of function. Priority 2 is reserved for employees faced with a downgrade of two or more grades lower than their current grade due to RIF or classification action; employees who have declined transfer of function or management-directed reassignment outside their commuting area; and, non-displaced overseas returnees within the same component (i.e. Army to Army). Among other registrant eligibles, Priority 3 consists of military spouse preference eligibles, Army family members, employees scheduled for RIF demotion of less than two grades or the equivalent, and employees facing separation based on declination of such an offer.

All registrants assigned a referral priority of 1 or 2 receive priority placement over **all** other recruitment sources. That is, when well qualified* priority 1 or 2 registrants match against a vacancy, all promotions, demotions, reassignments to positions with promotion potential, appointments (including reinstatements and conversions), and transfers *are prohibited*. When well-qualified Priority 3 registrants (other than Program S Military spouse preference eligibles) are available, only appointments (including reinstatements and conversions) and transfers are prohibited from being selected.

As PPP registrants match against vacancies, registrant resumes are reviewed for qualifications [in priority order of referral] by both the losing and gaining CPAC staff. If the determination is

made that the registrant is well qualified, an official job offer is extended by the losing activity and management is notified of a mandatory placement of a PPP registrant.

Program S: Military spouse preference (MSP) eligibles are Priority 3 registrants; however, they are registered under the "S" Program of the PPP. When contemplating fill of a vacancy for which Program S priority 3 matches are available, managers may either consider noncompetitive placement of a spouse found well-qualified, or proceed with competitive procedures. If the manager chooses to use competitive procedures (i.e. open a vacancy announcement), the MSP candidate will be matched against the announcement and will be screened for the identified skills along with the other applicants. When referred as best qualified (BQ) ***, MSP candidates block promotions, new Veterans Employment Opportunities Act (VEOA) appointments, reinstatements, and re-promotions. Accordingly, in all instances for which the MSP is found to be best qualified, managers are issued referral lists containing the MSP eligible along with all applicants eligible for noncompetitive appointments (i.e. reassignment, change to lower grade)

The only spouses who will be Program S eligible as a direct result of the new military spouse appointing authority issued via Executive Order 13474 and effective 11 Sep 09 are those who already meet all other requirements under the Program which includes, but is not limited to, relocation with a sponsor to a new permanent duty station; meeting the "well qualified" standard; and, being eligible for military spouse preference as prescribed in Subchapter 315 of the DoD Civilian Personnel Manual, DoD 1400.25-M.

For specific information on the DoD PPP and the procedures for the clearance of PPP against vacancies, please contact your servicing HR Specialist.

*Well-qualified indicates that the registrant is able to meet all job requirements - knowledge, skills and abilities - to successfully perform the duties of the position with general organizational orientation only. Minimum qualification standards do not suffice.

** Under special provisions, military spouses may be registered in Program A. As an alternative to Program S provisions, military spouses with sponsors on unaccompanied tours may relocate to their home of record or other alternative destination in the United States or its territories or possessions and register for activities within the commuting area. Since military spouse preference applies only within the geographic area of their sponsors' permanent duty stations, spouses who elect this option are not entitled to preference and shall be registered in Program A with standard Priority 3 status and in accordance with standard Program A procedures.

*** Military spouses are considered among the group of best qualified when they possess the required skill(s) identified by the selecting official and meet the Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) minimum qualification standards; meet OPM's minimum qualification standards when no skill(s) are used in the evaluation process; or, meet the minimum cut-off score for referral consideration under the merit promotion procedures. The method used is contingent upon local policy.

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