



Tips and Tidbits
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Question: What is priority consideration? Under what circumstances is this appropriate? Are applicants referred in this manner mandatory placements?

Priority consideration affords candidates a “first” look and therefore an opportunity for selection before other applicants are considered. Typically, candidates referred in this manner are referred ahead of/before other applicants, and if not selected initially, may be [again] considered along with the other applicants when they are referred; however, these candidates could also be among only one group of applicants referred and *not* sent out separately. In some cases, priority consideration candidates are **entitled** to be placed in the vacant position; in other cases the entitlement falls short of a mandated placement. The nature of the special consideration will depend upon the program/circumstance involved.

Priority placement consideration is given to individuals under/as a result of:

The Department of Defense (DoD) Priority Placement Program (PPP). Perhaps the most widely known instance through which employees/applicants are afforded priority consideration is via the PPP. If employees are scheduled for displacement due to downsizing or organizational restructuring, have been reduced in grade, or are completing overseas tours, provided they are well qualified and meet all requirements of the Program, they receive hiring preference/priority consideration for DoD job vacancies through the PPP. Military spouses are also afforded preference through this Program. Employee placement/selection in this circumstance is mandatory. [For additional information on the PPP, see Tips and Tidbits 9-2009].

Missed Consideration. Applicants also receive priority consideration for placement if it has been determined that the applicant failed to receive proper consideration for a job due to administrative errors or errors in the rating process. If the error is discovered after a selection has taken place, the applicant is entitled to a one-time priority consideration for the next “like” position. That is, the position against which the applicant is to receive consideration must be identical or nearly identical to the position against which the applicant did not receive proper consideration. Selection of the candidate in this instance is not mandatory and the candidate does not have priority over the DoD PPP. [For more, detailed, information on missed consideration, see Tips and Tidbits 3-2011].

Re-promotion Eligibles. Priority consideration might also occur in the case of a re-promotion eligible candidate. Employees are eligible for re-promotion when they previously held a higher grade and through no fault of their own were changed to a lower grade and placed on pay retention. Eligibility for re-promotion is attached to the installation at which the demotion occurred. Selection affords the employee the opportunity to be placed back in a position that is comparable in responsibility and qualifications for which they are receiving pay. While placement is ideal and encouraged, it is not mandatory nor is it an exception to the DoD PPP

Settlement Agreement: When it is determined that an employee/candidate did not receive fair consideration for a job due to discrimination, a settlement agreement may result. Accordingly, when the settlement agreement calls for mandatory placement, the placement/selection of the candidate must occur* and is an exception to the DoD PPP.

Interagency Career Transition Assistance Program (ICTAP) eligible candidates also receive priority consideration. ICTAP applicants are surplus or displaced employees from Federal agencies outside of the Department of Defense (DoD) and *must be* included as part of the area of consideration on DoD announcements when applications/resumes are accepted from other than current DoD employees serving on career or career conditional appointments. In this scenario, an ICTAP eligible employee must be selected prior to anyone other than a current DoD career or career conditional employee. The ICTAP eligible must apply against to the announcement, be determined well qualified, and be in the commuting area [of the position being filled]. This placement is not an exception to the DoD PPP; however, selection of ICTAP candidates is mandatory when all conditions have been met.

Federal Employees Compensation Act (FECA) affords retention rights to all Federal employees who sustain disabling injuries, including occupational disease or illness as a result of their employment [regardless of the type of appointment or length of employment]. In this regard, these employees receive priority consideration, and in most cases their selection is mandatory; however, these placements are not exceptions to the DoD PPP.

Finally, **obligated positions** provide the incumbents priority consideration. Positions become obligated when an employee has statutory restoration rights back to that position and are based upon a call to active duty and/or completion or curtailment of an overseas tour. Obligated positions may also cover employees who have been on extended leave without pay under certain circumstances. Placements of employees holding statutory return rights are mandatory; however, employees placed in these positions in the absence of those who hold return rights could be on a temporary basis.

For additional information on instances for which priority consideration may be extended, please contact your servicing Human Resources (HR) Specialist.

* Provided the candidate is otherwise qualified for the position.

BLANCHE D. ROBINSON

Human Resources Officer

Fort Benning CPAC

Phone: 545-1203 (Coml.); 835-1203 (DSN)

E-Mail: blanche.d.robinson@us.army.mil