

LABOR RELATIONS



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October 3, 2024

Mr. Ivan Butts
President
National Association of Postal Supervisors
1727 King Street, Suite 400
Alexandria, VA 22314-2753

Certified Mail Number
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Dear Ivan:

As a matter of general interest, the Postal Service is revising Handbook EL-312, *Employment and Placement*, Chapter 1, *General*.

The intent of the revisions is to clarify hiring responsibilities of leadership and align responsibilities following the Postal Service's restructure in 2020.

Enclosed for your review are two copies of the updated Chapter 1 of Handbook EL-312, one with and without track changes identified. Please contact Paulita Wimbush at extension 4042 if you have any questions concerning this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "B. Nicholson".

Bruce A. Nicholson
Director
Labor Relations Policies and Programs

Enclosures

1 General

11 Overview

111 Scope

This handbook provides employee recruitment, examination, and selection policy and procedures for the United States Postal Service. These instructions apply to employing, placing, and assigning career and noncareer field employees and promoting career employees. This handbook has limited application to Postal Career Executive Service (PCES) and Headquarters employees.

112 Review and Approval

Establishing employee recruitment, examination, and selection policy and procedures is under the authority of the vice president of Human Resources. Approval authority for actions described in this handbook rests with Human Resources.

113 Conditions on Using Policy

The *Employee and Labor Relations Manual* (ELM) and appropriate collective bargaining agreements also provide policy and guidance on employment and placement. Employees must not follow the procedures described in this handbook if they conflict with the provisions of current or future collective bargaining agreements.

114 Prohibition of Political Recommendations

114.1 General

The law (39 U.S.C. 1002) prohibits political and certain other recommendations for appointments, promotions, assignments, transfers, or designations of persons in the Postal Service.

114.2 Exceptions

Statements relating solely to character and residence are permitted, but every other kind of statement or recommendation is prohibited unless it is:

- a. Requested by the Postal Service and consists solely of an evaluation of the work performance, ability, aptitude, and general qualifications of an individual.
- b. Requested by a government representative investigating the individual's loyalty, suitability, or character.

114.3 Penalties

Anyone who requests or solicits a prohibited statement or recommendation

~~is subject to disqualification from Postal Service employment, and anyone in~~
the Postal Service who accepts such a statement may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including removal from employment.

115 **“Disabled” and “Disability”**

The words “disabled” and “disability” are in many federal statutes, rules, and regulations. They are used by the U.S. Department of Labor, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Office of Personnel Management, and the Social Security Administration, among others. Their meaning, however, differs based on the source statute, rule, or regulation that defines what the word means.

For example, an individual who is “disabled” as defined by the Office of Workers’ Compensation Programs statute may not meet the definition of “disabled” under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The meaning of these words is controlled by the context in which they are used.

12 Responsibility

121 **Vice President, Human Resources**

121.1 **Overview**

The U.S. Postal Service vice president of Human Resources oversees all aspects of the employee lifecycle, from hiring to retirement.

Human Resources supports all aspects of complement management, including Postal Service hiring and selection policies. Human Resources departments and management regarding employee hiring, selection, and placement include the following.

121.2 **Employment Policy and Programs**

This Headquarters unit develops policies and procedures for hiring, appointing, and promoting employees. Employment Policy and Programs oversees and is responsible for the following activities:

- a. Disseminating instructions, assistance, and technical guidance to Human Resources personnel to administer policies and programs related to employment and placement.
- b. Developing and supporting policies and programs related to hiring, selection, pre-employment screenings, biometric fingerprinting, revamped selection of the Rural Management Support System (RMSS) web application, and the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA).

121.3 **Area Director, Field Human Resources**

Area directors, Field Human Resources, oversee Human Resources (HR) field operations and execute national HR objectives, priorities and strategies by driving processes related to the following programs:

- a. Workforce planning;
- b. Complement;
- c. Employee onboarding;
- d. Hiring and retention;

- e. ~~Occupational safety and health;~~
- f. Diversity and inclusion; and
- g. Engagement.

121.4 **Manager, Field Human Resources**

The manager, Field Human Resources, is responsible for managing the Human Resources function for assigned territory, including the following:

- a. Coordinating all activities related to the following:
 - (1) Workforce planning;
 - (2) Complement;
 - (3) Personnel services;
 - (4) Safety and health;
 - (5) Injury compensation;
 - (6) Training and retention;
 - (7) Diversity and inclusion; and
 - (8) Engagement.
- b. Providing the full range of Human Resources support to the following:
 - (1) Customer services;
 - (2) Processing and distribution operations; and
 - (3) Logistics and maintenance.

122 **Vice President, Organization Development**

122.1 **Overview**

The vice president of Organization Development oversees the management and direction of the Organization Development team, which is comprised of Organizational Effectiveness; National Training; Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and other organizations.

Organization Development is responsible for employee examinations and training, career development and retention, and enhancing employee diversity and inclusion as follows.

122.2 **Organizational Effectiveness**

Organizational Effectiveness is responsible for the following activities:

- a. Developing instructions to guide the selection and designation of examiners to administer examinations.
- b. Developing and validating examinations and other selection instruments, including qualification standards and their applications.
- c. Maintaining examination results and scores.
- d. Providing support and guidance for internal personnel and external candidates on the examination process.
- e. Certifying Postal Service examination administrators.
- f. Reviewing and deciding reasonable accommodation requests for examinations, or ensuring requests are referred to the appropriate

~~Reasonable Accommodation Committee consistent with Handbook EL-307, *Reasonable Accommodation, An Interactive Process*.~~

- g. Reviewing and determining requests from Postal Service examination administrators for candidates to retest before the retest date.
- h. Reviewing any compromise to the examinations or related materials and working with appropriate stakeholders for resolution.

122.3 Examination Administrators

Examination administrators are responsible for the following activities:

- a. Furnishing information, accepting applications, and scheduling applicants to take examinations.
- b. Administering examinations according to the directions.
- c. Ordering, storing, and securing adequate supplies of examination materials.
- d. Reporting irregularities, loss of examination materials, and possible compromises of examinations.
- e. Ensuring that any employee placed in charge of an examination as an examiner is qualified, properly trained, and certified.

122.4 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

To advance a culture of diversity, equity, inclusion and acceptance at all levels of the organization, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) monitors workforce demographics and partners with the business to improve employee recruitment, retention, and advancement strategies.

123 Postal Inspection Service

The Postal Inspection Service may investigate any area related to employee recruitment, examinations, and selection, including, but not limited to:

- a. Alleged or suspected cheating during examinations.
- b. Falsification of information pertaining to employment.
- c. Lost or stolen examination material, unsecured material, and other breaches of security.

13 Multicomponent Employment and Placement Process

Employment and placement in the Postal Service is a multicomponent process. Each of the following components provides employing officials with opportunities to identify individuals who meet eligibility requirements and possess necessary knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics to successfully fill specific career and noncareer positions in the Postal Service.

Component	Covered in:
Recruitment process	Chapter 2
Examinations process	Chapter 3
Hiring lists	Chapter 4
Determination of eligibility/qualification requirements	Chapter 5

Application review	Chapter 5
Medical suitability assessment	Chapter 5
Reasonable accommodation, if applicable	Chapter 5 and Handbook EL-307
New-employee orientation	Chapter 5
Probationary period	Chapter 5
Interview	Chapter 6
Selection	Chapter 6
Job offer	Chapter 6
Assignment, reassignment, and promotion	Chapter 7

1 General

11 Overview

111 Scope

This handbook provides [employee](#) recruitment, examination, and selection policy and procedures for the United States Postal Service. These instructions apply to [employment, placement, employing, placing, and assignment of assigning](#) career and noncareer field employees and [promotion of promoting](#) career employees [in districts and areas](#). This handbook has limited application to Postal Career Executive Service (PCES) and Headquarters employees.

112 Review and Approval

~~The establishment of~~ [Establishing employee](#) recruitment, examination, and selection policy and procedures is under the authority of the vice president of [Employee Resource Management, Human Resources](#). Approval authority for actions described in this handbook rests with [area and district Human Resources managers](#). ~~The exceptions are that districts must have the approval of the National Test Administration Center (NTAC) in order to:~~ [Human Resources](#).

- a. ~~Establish or change an area eligibility register or mega register.~~
- b. ~~Make other changes to registers according to published instructions.~~
- c. ~~Allow for newly selected examiners to give examinations. NTAC provides certificates for this purpose.~~

113 Conditions on [Use of Using](#) Policy

The *Employee and Labor Relations Manual* (ELM) and appropriate collective bargaining agreements also provide policy and guidance ~~in on~~ employment and placement. ~~District and area employees should~~ [Employees must](#) not follow [the](#) procedures described in this handbook if they conflict with the provisions of current or future collective bargaining agreements.

114 Prohibition of Political Recommendations

[114.1](#) [General](#)

The law (39 U.S.C. 1002) prohibits political and certain other recommendations for appointments, promotions, assignments, transfers, or designations of persons in the Postal Service.

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Statements relating solely to character and residence are permitted, but every other kind of statement or recommendation is prohibited unless it is:

- a. Requested by the Postal Service and consists solely of an evaluation of the work performance, ability, aptitude, and general qualifications of an individual.
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114.23 **Penalties**

Anyone who requests or solicits a prohibited statement or recommendation is subject to disqualification from ~~the~~ Postal Service employment, and anyone in the Postal Service who accepts such a statement may be suspended or removed subject to disciplinary action, up to and including removal from employment.

115 **“Disabled” and “Disability”**

The words “disabled” and “disability” are ~~found~~ in many federal statutes, rules, and regulations. They are used by the U.S. Department of Labor, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Office of Personnel Management, and the Social Security Administration, among others. Their meaning, however, differs based on the source statute, rule, or regulation that defines what the word means.

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12 Responsibility

121 **Vice President, ~~Employee Resource Management~~ Human Resources**

121.1 **Overview**

The U.S. Postal Service vice president of Human Resources oversees all aspects of the employee lifecycle, from hiring to retirement.

Human Resources supports all aspects of complement management, including Postal Service hiring and selection policies. Human Resources departments and management regarding employee hiring, selection, and placement include the following.

121.24 **~~Selection, Evaluation, and Recognition~~ Employment Policy and Programs**

This Headquarters unit develops policies and procedures for hiring recruitment, examination, selection, appointment, and promotion of appointing, and promoting employees. Selection, Evaluation, and Recognition Employment Policy and Programs oversees and is also responsible for the following activities:

- e.a. Disseminating instructions, assistance, and technical guidance to ~~area and district H~~ human Resources personnel to administer policies and programs related to employment and placement.
- a. Developing instructions to guide the selection and designation of

~~examiners to administer examinations, and to operate NTAC.~~

- ~~b. Developing and validating examinations and other selection instruments, including qualification standards and their applications, supporting policies and programs related to hiring, selection, pre-employment screenings, biometric fingerprinting, revamped selection of the Rural Management Support System (RMSS) web application, and the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA).~~

121.23 **Manager, National Test Administration Center** **Area Director, Field Human Resources**

~~The manager of NTAC is responsible for the following activities: Area directors, Field Human Resources, oversee Human Resources (HR) field operations and execute national HR objectives, priorities and strategies by driving processes related to the following programs:~~

- ~~a. Stocking examination materials and distributing examination supplies to districts.~~
- ~~b. Scoring examinations and generating results~~
- ~~c. Maintaining electronic files and other appropriate records of examination results.~~
- ~~d. Reporting possible loss or compromise of examination materials to the manager of Selection, Evaluation, and Recognition, or designated representative.~~
- ~~e. Certifying examiners and providing functional instruction to examiners.~~
 - ~~a. Workforce planning;~~
 - ~~b. Complement;~~
 - ~~c. Employee onboarding;~~
 - ~~d. Hiring and retention;~~
 - ~~e. Occupational safety and health;~~
 - ~~f. Diversity and inclusion; and~~
 - ~~g. Engagement.~~

122 **Diversity Development**

~~To help ensure that recruitment, retention, and promotion practices draw upon and support the communities served by the Postal Service, Diversity Development implements special-emphasis programs and other affirmative employment plans to capture the unique contributions that applicants and employees have to offer. To enhance and improve workforce management, Diversity Development is responsible for the following activities:~~

- ~~a. Developing and implementing recruitment and hiring strategies for increasing the employability of underrepresented groups, including women, minorities, and people with disabilities.~~
- ~~b. Establishing retention initiatives to reduce diverse workforce turnover.~~
- ~~c. Establishing methods to increase the participation of underrepresented groups in development and promotion activities.~~
- ~~d. Identifying and eradicating employment barriers for minority and female applicants.~~

123 **District Managers**

District managers implement national policy and procedures within their districts. They may withdraw or restrict for cause the appointing authority of postmasters and other installation heads. As required, district managers assist managers within their jurisdictions to develop specialized recruitment and selection methods and institute necessary corrective action based on evidence of discrepancy. The district manager approves expansion of the area of consideration for EAS positions involving the payment of relocation benefits, if the district manager is in the next level of management above the vacancy. District managers ensure that special emphasis employment programs are administered appropriately.

124121.4 **Manager, Field Human Resources (District)**

The Manager, Field Human Resources (District), is responsible for managing the Human Resources function for assigned territory, including the following:

- a. Assisting selecting officials in determining appropriate areas of consideration and setting up review committees for providing meaningful promotional opportunities.
 - b. Ensuring that appointments and promotions comply with requirements and restrictions, both statutory and regulatory.
 - c. Planning and conducting appropriate ongoing recruitment efforts to meet local needs.
 - d. Planning, opening, announcing, and publicizing examinations for recruitment to meet staffing needs of the district.
 - e. Providing facilities and personnel required for administration of examinations.
 - f. Providing resources for fair and reasonable evaluations of applicants to ensure that they are personally and medically suitable for employment.
- a. Coordinating all activities related to the following:
 - (1) Workforce planning;
 - (2) Complement;
 - (3) Personnel services;
 - (4) Safety and health;
 - (5) Injury compensation;
 - (6) Training and retention;
 - (7) Diversity and inclusion; and
 - (8) Engagement.
 - b. Providing the full range of Human Resources support to the following:
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Organizational Effectiveness is responsible for the following activities:

- a. Developing instructions to guide the selection and designation of examiners to administer examinations, ~~and to operate NTAC.~~
- b. Developing and validating examinations and other selection instruments, including qualification standards and their applications.
- c. Maintaining examination results and scores.
- d. Providing support and guidance for internal personnel and external candidates on the examination process.
- e. Certifying Postal Service examination administrators.
- f. Reviewing and deciding reasonable accommodation requests for examinations, or ensuring requests are referred to the appropriate Reasonable Accommodation Committee consistent with Handbook EL-307, *Reasonable Accommodation, An Interactive Process*.
- g. Reviewing and determining requests from Postal Service examination administrators for candidates to retest before the retest date.
- h. Reviewing any compromise to the examinations or related materials and working with appropriate stakeholders for resolution.

~~125~~122.3 District Examination Administrators

Examination administrators are responsible for the following activities:

- a. Furnishing information, accepting applications, and scheduling applicants to take examinations.
- b. Administering examinations according to the directions ~~provided by NTAC.~~
- c. Ordering ~~and~~, storing, and securing adequate supplies of examination materials ~~and providing for their security.~~
- d. Reporting irregularities, loss of examination materials, and possible compromises of examinations ~~to the district manager and to NTAC.~~
- e. Ensuring that any employee placed in charge of an examination as an examiner is qualified, properly trained, and certified ~~by NTAC.~~
- f. ~~Making provisions for special scoring of entrance examinations, when directed by NTAC.~~
- g. ~~Replying to inquiries concerning the functions of the examination center, and preparing and submitting reports as required.~~
- h. ~~Maintaining registers and issuing *Hiring Worksheets*, as required.~~

122.4 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

To advance a culture of diversity, equity, inclusion and acceptance at all levels of the organization, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) monitors workforce demographics and partners with the business to improve employee recruitment, retention, and advancement strategies.

426 123 Postal Inspection Service

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Component	Covered in:
Recruitment process	Chapter <u>2</u>
Examinations process	Chapter <u>3</u>
Hiring <u>I</u> Lists	Chapter 4
Component	Covered in:
Determination of eligibility/qualification requirements	Chapter <u>5</u>
Application review	Chapter <u>5</u>
<u>Realistic job preview</u>	<u>Chapter 5</u>
<u>Drug Screening</u>	<u>Chapter 5</u>
<u>Medical suitability assessment</u>	<u>Chapter 5</u>
<u>Reasonable accommodation, if applicable</u>	<u>Chapter 5 and Handbook EL-307</u>
<u>New-employee orientation</u>	<u>Chapter 5</u>
<u>Probationary period</u>	<u>Chapter 5</u>
Interview	Chapter <u>6</u>
Selection	Chapter <u>6</u>
Job offer	Chapter <u>6</u>
<u>Special Agency Checks</u>	<u>Chapter 5</u>
<u>Medical suitability assessment</u>	<u>Chapter 5</u>
<u>Reasonable accommodation, if applicable</u>	<u>Chapter 5 and Handbook EL-307</u>
<u>New Employee Orientation</u>	<u>Chapter 5</u>

Probationary Period	Chapter 5
Assignment, Reassignment reassignment , and Promotion promotion	Chapter 7