

LABOR RELATIONS



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

Certified Mail Number  
9589 0710 5270 0684 7725 73

Dear Ivan:

As a matter of general interest, the Postal Service is revising Handbook EL-312, *Employment and Placement*, Chapter 4, *Processing External Vacancy Announcements and Veterans' Preference Claims*.

The purpose of the revisions are to provide clarification on the Postal Service's policies with hiring responsibilities and to align with the current organization structure.

Enclosed are the proposed changes one with and without changes identified.

Please contact Paulita Wimbush at extension 4042 if you have any questions concerning this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Paulita Wimbush".

FOR

Bruce A. Nicholson  
Director  
Labor Relations Policies and Programs

Enclosures

# 4 Processing External Vacancy Announcements and Veterans' Preference Claims

## 41 Introduction

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### 411 **General**

This chapter is about the process used to ~~(a) announce;~~

- a. Announce Postal Service job vacancies to external applicants (see ~~Chapter~~chapter 7 for more on Executive Administrative Schedule [EAS] job vacancies, and Handbook EL-304 for positions filled under the Maintenance Selection System); ~~(b) determine [MSS];~~
- b. Determine the order in which competitive job applicants are considered based on examination results (where applicable); and ~~(e) adjudicate~~
- c. Adjudicate claims for veterans' preference.

### 411412 **Definitions**

The following terms are defined as used in this chapter:

- a. *Selecting official* — The Human Resources employee or designee responsible for processing the job vacancy announcement.
- b. *Eligibles* — Applicants who meet ~~thea~~ the position's qualifications ~~for the position,~~ including eligibility criteria and passing entrance examinations ~~and other eligibility criteria.~~
- c. ~~Hiring List~~ — ~~A Hiring List consists of a listing of the names of eligible applicants who applied to the specific vacancy announcement arranged in descending order by score and veterans' preference status, as appropriate to the position being filled, for appointment consideration. A listing of the names of eligible applicants who applied to the specific vacancy announcement arranged in descending order by score or and veterans' preference status, as appropriate to the position being filled, for appointment consideration.~~
- d.c. Vacancy announcement — A job posting published manually or online soliciting applications from interested persons. A vacancy announcement ~~normally~~typically contains the position title, location, position information, starting hourly rate or salary, functional purpose, qualifications and requirements, and contact information.

- e.d.** *Veterans' preference* — Veterans' preference in its present form comes from the Veterans' Preference Act of 1944, as amended, and is codified in various provisions of Title 5, United States Code (U.S.C.). By law, veterans who are disabled or who served on active duty in the Armed Forces during certain specified time periods or in military campaigns are entitled to preference over others in hiring from competitive lists of eligibles. Preference categories and points are distinguished by the use of codes, as follows:
- (1) *Compensable 30 percent preference (CPS)* — This code indicates that the individual claims a 10-point preference and has a compensable service-connected disability that is 30 percent or more. See [483.3](#).
  - (2) *Compensable disability preference (CP)* — This code indicates that the individual claims a 10-point preference and has a compensable service-connected disability that is at least 10 percent but less than 30 percent. See [483.3](#).
  - (3) *Disability preference (XP)* — This code indicates that the individual claims a 10-point preference and ~~(1) has:~~
    - (a) ~~Has~~ received a Purple Heart, or (2) ~~has~~
    - (3)(b) ~~Has~~ a current service-connected disability, or is receiving compensation, disability retirement benefits, or pension from the U.S. military or the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, but does not qualify as a CP or CPS. See [483.3](#).
  - (4) *Derived Preference preference (XP)* — Spouses, widows, widowers, or parents of veterans are eligible for 10 points as described in [483.322](#), [483.323](#), and [483.324](#).
  - (5) *Five-point preference eligible (TP)* — This code indicates that an individual claims a 5-point preference based on qualifying U.S. military service. See [483.1](#).
  - (6) *Sole Survivor survivor (SSP)* — A separation of a member from the ~~armed forces~~ U.S. Armed Forces, at the request of the member, who is ~~thea family's~~ only surviving child ~~in a family~~.
- f.e.** *Veterans' preference adjudication* — The process of verifying entitlement to claimed veterans' preference.
- g.f.** *Hiring List* — ~~A Hiring List consists of a list — A listing of the names of eligible applicants who applied to the specific vacancy announcement arranged. The list, which is used for appointment consideration, is organized in descending order by score and veterans' preference status, as appropriate to the position being filled, for appointment consideration. A listing of the names of eligible applicants who applied to the specific vacancy announcement arranged in descending order by score or and veterans' preference status, as appropriate to the position being filled, for appointment consideration...~~

### 412413 Responsibility

Human Resources (for vacancies within ~~their respective districts~~) Human Resources' respective field units) and the Headquarters Talent Acquisition office (for headquarters and headquarters field-unit vacancies) are responsible for ~~the management of~~ managing externally posted vacancies and ~~the security of~~ securing associated records.

### 413414 Restricted Records

The Postal Service restricts access to examination results, registers, applications, ~~Hiring Lists~~ hiring lists, and other hiring and placement materials. Postal Service employees must protect these records from access by unauthorized persons, and the records ~~should~~ must not be in view of applicants.

Authorized persons (such as hiring ~~practices~~ review team members, higher-level managers, or ~~EEOE~~ Equal Employment Opportunity counselors, dispute-resolution specialists, and contract investigators) may review hiring and placement records on a need-to-know basis.

Information about individual employees may be released to collective bargaining agents if the employees are members of the collective bargaining unit represented by the collective bargaining agent. For positions filled under ~~the Maintenance Selection System (MSS)~~, see Handbook EL-304 for instructions pertaining to release of records associated with MSS.

A collective bargaining agent may request a copy of a ~~Hiring List~~ hiring list when the agent represents the employees hired from the ~~Hiring List-Identifying~~ hiring list. ~~Since applicants are not part of the bargaining unit (especially applicants who are not hired), identifying~~ information for applicants not hired must be ~~obliterated~~ struck from a ~~Hiring List~~ hiring list before it is provided to a collective bargaining agent. The information for applicants hired from a ~~Hiring List is not obliterated~~ hiring list is relevant and must be provided if the hired applicants are in the same bargaining unit as the requesting union.

For more information about release of protected records, see Handbook AS-353, *Guide to Privacy, the Freedom of Information Act, and Records Management*.

## 42 Announcement and Application Process

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### 421 Announcing Vacancies

~~Guidelines for posting external vacancy announcements, including those requiring entrance examinations, are in 421.1 through 421.4.~~

#### 421.1 When to Announce Vacancies

~~Announce~~ Selecting officials must announce vacancies when necessary to meet Postal Service staffing needs. When ~~you are~~ authorized to fill a vacant

Employment and Placement position externally, they must use the competitive selection process (see Chapterchapter 2). The hiring selecting official starts the process to post the vacancy. PostSelecting officials must post external vacancies on [www.usps.com/careers](http://www.usps.com/careers).

#### 421.2 **Announcement Period**

Human Resources ~~or or~~ Talent Acquisition ~~is~~are responsible for ensuring that external announcements are posted on [www.usps.com/careers](http://www.usps.com/careers) for a minimum ~~range~~ of -3 to 5 calendar days.

#### 421.3 **Attracting Applicants**

~~In order to educate applicants about the job, the~~The following apply:

- a. ~~The~~ announcement ~~should~~must include ~~statements that describe it. Applicants will want to know the the~~ following information about the position:
  - (1) ~~Job Title~~title and ~~Pay Grade~~pay grade.
  - (2) Functional purpose, duties and responsibilities, and position requirements ~~of the position~~.
  - (3) Duty ~~Station~~station.
  - (4) Work hours/ ~~Nonscheduled and nonscheduled~~ days.
  - ~~Benefits~~
- (5) ~~When~~Employee health insurance benefits.
- b. ~~See 421.4 regarding~~ restricting the area of consideration, ~~see 421.4.~~
- c. ~~To~~ attract diverse candidates, it is beneficial to partner with Diversity, Equity and Inclusion personnel (see 12222 and 22122).
- d. ~~Announcements must be posted online. To generate widespread publicity, announcements may also be distributed strategically for posting in~~ the following:
  - a.(1) Public and employee bulletin boards in Post Offices and in installations covered by the announcement.
  - b.(2) Public bulletin boards in local Post Offices and ~~postal~~Postal Service facilities ~~in the local area~~.
  - e.(3) Public bulletin boards in local, federal, state, and municipal buildings, as appropriate.
  - d.(4) ~~Federal~~Local federal job ~~information centers in the local area~~.
  - e.(5) ~~State~~Local state employment offices ~~in the local area~~.

#### 421.4 **Area of Consideration**

##### 421.41 **General**

An eligibility statement regarding the area of consideration may be used on external postings. When limiting consideration to a specific geographical area, the selecting official must include a descriptive statement, such as

~~“must~~**Must** be willing to participate in screening at the local office,” and include the following statement (see 421.4142 and 421.4243):

**Note:** Veterans who are entitled to veterans' preference or covered by the Veterans Employment Opportunities Act may apply for any posted position.

Alternative arrangements must be made as necessary for an individual performing U.S. military service.

#### ~~421.4142~~**421.42** **Area of Consideration Exceptions**

Applicants who are entitled to veterans' preference or covered by the Veterans Employment Opportunities Act (see 421.4243) may apply for any externally posted vacancy regardless of the applicant's geographical location. Human Resources personnel are responsible for determining the eligibility of individual applicants and justifying any rejection based on the eligibility statements.

#### ~~421.4242~~**421.43** **Veterans Employment Opportunities Act**

The Veterans Employment Opportunities Act (VEOA) provides that agencies must allow veterans' preference eligibles (see subchapter 48) and other eligible veterans to apply for all positions announced externally without regard to geographic limitations.

**a.** To qualify as a VEOA eligible, an applicant must be ~~either: (a) a:~~

(1) A “preference eligible”; ~~or (b) a~~

(2) A veteran separated from the ~~armed forces~~U.S. Armed Forces after 3 or more years of continuous active service performed under honorable conditions; ~~or (c) a:~~

(3) A veteran who was released shortly before completing a 3-year tour.

**b.** Active service, as defined in Title 37 U.S.C., means active duty in the U.S. uniformed services and includes ~~(a) full~~the following:

(1) Full-time training duty; ~~(b) annual~~

(2) Annual training duty; ~~(c) full~~

(3) Full-time National Guard duty; and ~~(d) attendance~~

(4) Attendance, while in the active service, at a school designated as a service school by law, or by the secretary of the U.S. military department concerned.

## 422 Entrance Examinations for Announced Vacancies

Many vacancies posted externally have one or more entrance examination requirements. Applicants who qualify based on their performance on the applicable examination(s) may receive further employment consideration depending on their examination score and preference-eligible status. However, passing the applicable examination(s) does not guarantee employment with the Postal Service (see chapter 3).

## 423 Processing Applications

~~Guidelines for processing applications in response to an open announcement are provided in 423.1 through 423.4 below.~~

### 423.1 Following Instructions on the Announcement

Individuals interested in being considered for a posted vacancy must apply according to the instructions provided on the announcement for that vacancy.

### 423.2 Accepting Applications

Applications are not accepted before the opening date or after the closing date of a vacancy announcement.

### 423.3 ~~Allow~~Allowing Time to Complete the Assessment Process

If an examination is required, applicants must receive instructions that may include time limits for completing the assessment process.

### 423.4 Duplicate Applications

An applicant may submit only one application per announcement for an externally posted vacancy. If the applicant submits more than one application, the examination score on the first application received stands. Human Resources rejects any additional applications submitted, even if the first rating processed is an ineligible rating or lower than a subsequent rating.

### 423.5 ~~Reserved~~

## 4343 Examination Results and Notices of Results

### 431 Notice of Results

Upon ~~completion of~~completing an examination, applicants receive their assessment result.

432 **Current Score Valid Until Expiration Date**

An applicant's current score on the appropriate examination is used for current and future Postal Service job applications until the expiration date, unless the applicant optschooses to retest on the same examination after the retest date.



## 433 Applicants Not Meeting Examination Requirement

### 433.1 General

Applicants who do not achieve a passing score or who fail to complete the examination process are ineligible to be considered for the current vacancy or any other vacancies requiring the exam for which they applied. These applicants are ~~(a)~~:

- a) ~~notified.~~ Notified that they are not eligible for the vacancy; ~~i~~; and ~~(b) given~~
- b. Given the date when they will be eligible to be retested.

### 433.2 ~~433.2~~ Retest Optional

An applicant may, but is not required to, retest on or after the retest date. ~~In order to~~ To initiate a retest, ~~if~~ the applicant ~~applies chooses, the applicant must apply~~ under another vacancy announcement requiring the same exam. If an applicant chooses to retest, the new result will be used for that and future applications, regardless of whether it is higher or lower than the previous result.

### 433.3 ~~433.3~~ Retest Required

An applicant must retest if ~~they apply the applicant applies~~ for a job requiring the same examination after the expiration date of the applicant's prior examination result.

## 434 Applicants Who Achieve a Passing Score

Applicants who qualify on the required examination for a vacancy and meet other applicable eligibility requirements are known as "eligibles." Eligibles are ranked according to their final score (see subchapter [44](#)).

## 435 Effect of Veterans' Preference Claims

External applicants may claim veterans' preference when they apply for a vacancy. Five or ~~ten~~ 10 points are added to the passing examination score or rating of an eligible who claims veterans' preference. Veterans' preference points are not added to ineligible (non-passing) examination scores.

Thus, veterans' preference affects the applicant's ranking relative to other applicants for the same vacancy, but does not convert a non-passing score to a passing score. ~~To promote the efficient processing of~~ To efficiently process applications, veterans' preference is adjudicated as early in the sequence of activities as possible when processing an external vacancy.

## 436 Breaking Ties

When two or more applicants within a group have the same final numerical rating, the tie is broken by:

- a. Placing XP-preference eligibles ~~ahead of~~ before TP-preference eligibles.
- b. Placing TP-preference eligibles ~~ahead of~~ before nonpreference eligibles.

- c. Using the number, from lowest to highest, randomly assigned to the candidate's application by the applicant-tracking system.

## 44 Determining ~~the~~ Order of Applicants on ~~a~~ Hiring List

### 441 Basic Order

~~Applicants~~ The names of applicants are organized on a ~~Hiring List~~ hiring list in the following order:

#### 441.1 ~~Group 1~~: Applicants Claiming Preference Based on Compensable Disability

a. Applicants ~~The names of applicants~~ who claim 10-point preference based on a compensable U.S. military service-connected disability of 10 percent or more are ~~arranged~~ placed at the top of the ~~Hiring List~~ hiring list in descending order of final numerical rating in this group.

#### 441.2 ~~Group 2~~: All Other Eligibles in Order

b. All ~~The names of all~~ other eligibles are placed on the hiring list in the following order:

a.(1) Applicants ~~The names of applicants~~ claiming other 10-point preference (XP) and the names of applicants claiming 5-point preference (TP) are placed ~~ahead~~ above the names of nonpreference-eligible applicants with the same final rating.

b.(2) The names of XP eligibles are placed ~~ahead~~ above the names of TP eligibles with the same final rating.

### 442 ~~Order for Jobs Restricted to Preference Eligibles~~

The following order is used for positions restricted to preference eligibles (see 232.52):

- a. *First* — Final scores with CP or CPS are ~~arranged~~ organized on the hiring list in order of numerical rating.
- b. *Second* — All remaining scores for applicants who claim veterans' preference marked XP or TP are ~~arranged~~ organized on the hiring list in order of numerical rating.
- c. *Third* — All remaining scores are ~~arranged~~ organized on the hiring list in order of numerical rating (if nonveterans were allowed to compete).

### 443 Order for Nonbargaining Scientific and Professional Positions

~~Applicants~~ The names of applicants for nonbargaining scientific and professional positions are ~~arranged~~ organized on the hiring list by final numerical ratings, including claimed veterans' preference points, in descending order. To break ties where the final scores are the same, the names of applicants with CP or CPS preference are placed ~~ahead~~ above the names of XP applicants, ~~who appear ahead~~ whose names are listed above the names of TP applicants.

**444 Order for General Application File**

When selecting officials are filling vacancies that do not require an examination, ~~applicants,~~ applicants' names are sorted on the hiring list, and the applicants must be considered for employment by priority groups in the following order:

- d. a. *Group 1* — Persons entitled to 10-point preference who have a compensable service-connected disability of 10 percent or more.
- e. b. *Group 2* — All other persons entitled to veterans' preference.
- f.c. c. *Group 3* — All other applicants.

## 45 Other Applicant Processes

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**451 Change in Name, Address, or Veterans' Preference Claim**

Applicants are responsible for changingupdating their contact information (such as name, address, phone numbers, and email addresses) and other information inon their application or online account. The applicant is responsible for notifying the responsible Human Resources office if contact information or veterans' preference entitlement changes after an application is submitted.-

When informed of a change, Human Resources will re-adjudicate veterans' preference and make adjustments to correct the eligible's standing on the Hiring-Listhiring list, if appropriate (see [487](#)).

**452 Failure to Respond**

If an eligible fails to respond to an instruction, official correspondence, or request for information needed for an eligibility or suitability decision, Human Resources will disqualify the applicant for failure to respond to official correspondence.

## 46 Reserved

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## 47 Reserved

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## 48 Veterans' Preference

### 481 Requirement

The Postal Service applies veterans' preference as required by Titles 5 and 39 U.S.C. and 5 Code of Federal Regulations for certain employment purposes, including appointment. Applicants claiming veterans' preference must provide dates of active-duty service and claim veterans' preference when applying for a vacancy.

The applicant is responsible for providing proof of entitlement to the preference claimed. If supporting documentation is not received with the application, Human Resources Shared Service Center-~~(HRSSC)~~ notifies the eligible of the discrepancy. The applicant must present the supporting documentation by the time the selecting official considers the applicant's application. If the eligible indicates that the preference claimed was a mistake or has changed, Human Resources cancels and, if necessary, reissues the ~~Hiring List~~hiring list and adjusts the eligible's position.

No selection canwill be made from the ~~Hiring List~~hiring list until the adjudication process has been completed for all applicants who claim veterans' preference points.

### 482 Authority to Adjudicate Veterans' Preference

Veterans' preference points can make the difference in whether or not an applicant receives employment consideration; therefore, verifying entitlement to claimed preference is essential to providing fair and equitable treatment. This process is known as *adjudication*.

Most veterans' preference claims are adjudicated by the Human Resources Shared Service Center-~~(HRSSC)~~, the field Human Resources office, or a designee. Human Resources personnel confirm these determinations when ~~they audit Hiring Lists~~Human Resources audits hiring lists. Cases involving preference as the spouse or parent of a veteran must be referred to National Human Resources (Headquarters) for adjudication.

### 483 KindsTypes of Veterans' Preference

#### 483.1 No-Point Preference

The following apply:

a. A U.S. veteran discharged or released under honorable conditions from a period of active U.S. military duty after August 29, 2008, by reason of sole survivorship is eligible for preference in appointment. A sole-survivor discharge is defined as the separation of a member from the ~~armed forces~~U.S. Armed Forces, at the request of the member, who is the only surviving child in a family in which the father, mother, or one or more siblings: meets all of the following criteria:

a.(1) Served in the ~~armed forces;~~ and U.S. Armed Forces;

b.(2) Was killed; died as a result of wounds, accident, or disease; is in a captured or missing-in-action status; or is

permanently 100 percent disabled or hospitalized on a continuing basis, and, as a result, is not employed gainfully; and

~~e.(3)~~ Death, status, or disability did not result from the intentional misconduct or willful neglect of the parent or sibling and was not incurred during a period of unauthorized absence; ~~and.~~

~~d.b.~~ The member must have served in one of the situations described in Exhibit 483 and would have met the required time period of continuous active-duty service if the sole ~~survivorship~~ discharge or release had not interrupted military service.

**Example:** There is a requirement of 24 months of continuous active-duty service, or the full period called to active duty, for a campaign medal holder or Gulf War U.S. veteran who enlisted after September 7, 1980, (or began active duty on or after October 14, 1982, and had not previously completed 24 months of continuous active duty). An individual would still be entitled to preference eligibility if the following applied:

- (1) Active duty is cut short at fewerless than 24 months by a sole ~~survivorship~~ discharge or release; and
- (2) ~~Individual~~The individual meets the other requirements for veterans' preference eligibility.

### 483.2 **Five-Point Preference**

For 5-point preference purposes, an individual must have been discharged or released from active-duty service in the U.S. Armed Forces under honorable conditions (see [232.3h](#)) and have served in one of the situations described in [Exhibit 483](#).

Exhibit 483

#### **Service Requirements**

Persons claiming 5-point veterans' preference or preference as a sole survivor must have been discharged or released from active-duty service in the U.S. Armed Forces under honorable conditions (see [232.3h](#)) and have served in one of the following situations:

- a. During a war.
- b. During the period April 28, 1952, through July 1, 1955.
- c. For more than 180 consecutive days, other than for training, any part of which occurred after January 31, 1955, and before October 15, 1976.
- d. During the Gulf War from August 2, 1990, through January 2, 1992.
- e. For more than 180 consecutive days, other than for training, any part of which occurred during the period beginning September 11, 2001, and ending August 31, 2010.
- f. In a campaign or expedition for which a campaign medal has been authorized. Any U.S. Armed Forces ~~Campaign~~campaign or ~~Expeditionary Medal~~expeditionary medal qualifies for veterans' preference.

A campaign medal holder or Gulf War U.S. veteran who originally enlisted after September 7, 1980, (or began active duty on or after October 14, 1982, and has not previously completed 24 months of continuous active duty) must

have served continuously for 24 months or the full period that the individual was called or ordered to active duty. The 24-month service requirement does not apply to 10-point preference eligibles separated for disability incurred or aggravated in the line of duty, or to veterans separated for hardship or other reasons under 10 U.S.C. 1171 or 1173 or 5 U.S.C. 2108(1)(D).

**Note:** The term *preference eligible* does not include, for reduction in force (RIF) purposes, most retired members of the U.S. Armed Forces. For exceptions to this general rule, refer to ~~OPM's~~the U.S. Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) "Vet Guide for HR Professionals" at <https://www.opm.gov>. However, retired members of the U.S. Armed Forces may still be preference eligibles for adverse-action purposes. Active duty for training or inactive duty by National Guard or Reserve soldiers does not qualify as active duty for preference.

### 483.3 **Ten-Point Preference**

#### 483.31 **Disabled Veterans**

A U.S. veteran discharged or released from active duty under honorable conditions, who served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces at any time,

may be assigned 10-point preference, provided the veteran meets the criteria in one of the following categories:

- a. *Compensable disability preference (CP)* — Has a compensable service-connected disability that is at least 10 percent but less than 30 percent.
- b. *Compensable 30 percent preference (CPS)* — Has a compensable service-connected disability that is 30 percent or more.
- c. *Disability preference (XP)* — (1) **hasHas** received a Purple Heart, or (2) **hasHas** a current service-connected disability or is receiving compensation, disability retirement benefits, or pension from the U.S. military or the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, but does not qualify as a CP or CPS.

#### 483.32 **Ten-Point Derived Preference (XP)**

##### 483.321 **General**

Spouses, widows, widowers, or parents of U.S. veterans are eligible for 10 points as described in 483.322, 483.323, and 483.324. This type of preference is derived preference because it is based on service of a veteran who is not able to use the preference through unemployment or death.

##### 483.322 **Spouses of Disabled Veterans**

The spouse of **ana U.S.** Armed **Forces'Forces** veteran on whose service a claim is based, is eligible for 10-point veterans' preference provided both of the following criteria are met:

- a. The veteran served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces at any time and was discharged or released from active duty under honorable conditions.
- b. The veteran has a service-connected disability and is disqualified for a federal position along the general lines of the veteran's usual occupation. Such a disqualification may be presumed when the veteran is unemployed, provided one of the following criteria is met:

- (1) Has been rated by appropriate military or Department of Veterans Affairs authorities to be 100 percent disabled or unemployable.
- (2) Has retired, been separated, or resigned from a civil-service position on the basis of a disability that is service-connected in origin.
- (3) Has attempted to obtain a civil-service position or other position along the lines of the veteran's usual occupation and has failed to qualify because of a service-connected disability.

##### 483.323 **Widows or Widowers of Veterans**

The widow or widower of a U.S. veteran, who received a discharge under honorable conditions, **and the widow or widower** was not divorced from the veteran, and has not remarried, is eligible for 10-point veterans' preference provided one of the following criteria is met:

- a. The veteran served during a war or during the period April 28, 1952, through July 1, 1955, or in a campaign or expedition for which a campaign medal has been authorized.
- b. The veteran died while on active duty that included service described



in 483.323a above, under conditions that would not have been the basis for other than an honorable or general discharge.

If the widow or widower remarries and the remarriage is annulled, the former widow or widower may apply for restoration of preference. Evidence of divorce of the widow or widower is not a basis to restore widow or widower preference, since the act of remarriage, rather than a remarried state, terminates eligibility for preference. Thus, widow or widower preference can only be restored if the act of marriage is annulled.

#### 483.324 **Parents of Veterans**

Parents of U.S. veterans are eligible for 10-point preference under the conditions described below.

- a. *Parent of a deceased veteran.* The parent of a U.S. veteran who died under honorable conditions while on active duty during a war or during the period April 28, 1952, through July 1, 1955, or in a campaign or expedition for which a campaign medal has been authorized; and:
  - (1) The spouse of that parent is totally and permanently disabled; or
  - (2) That parent, when preference is claimed, is unmarried or, if married, legally separated from that parent's spouse.
- b. *Parent of a disabled veteran.* The parent of a living disabled U.S. veteran if the veteran was separated with an honorable or general discharge from active duty performed at any time and is permanently and totally disabled from a service-connected injury or illness, and:
  - (1) The spouse of that parent is totally and permanently disabled; or
  - (2) That parent, when preference is claimed, is unmarried or, if married, legally separated from that parent's spouse.

#### 484 **Proof of Preference Claimed**

##### 484.1 **General**

The applicant is responsible for providing the necessary proof of entitlement to ~~claimed~~ claim veterans' preference. Proof is requested at the time of application. ~~To promote the efficient processing of employment applications, veterans' preference:~~

a. To promote the efficient processing of employment applications, veterans' preference:

a.(1) Is adjudicated at the ~~very~~ beginning of the screening process when possible; and

b.(2) Is reviewed and adjudicated by the time of selection.

b. Adjudication of preference requires ~~a review~~ reviewing and ~~comparison of~~ comparing the following:

a.(1) PS Form 2591, *Application for Employment*.

b.(2) DD Form 214, *Certificate of Release or Discharge* ~~From~~ from *Active Duty*, or, if the employee served after August 20, 2009, DD ~~Form~~ Form 214, member 4, ~~copy~~, or other official documents issued by the branch of service that ~~certify~~ certifies that the

Employment and Placement service member is expected to be discharged or released from active duty service in the ~~armed forces~~, Armed Forces under honorable conditions. This must occur no later than 120 days after the date the certification is submitted for consideration in the hiring process.

~~e.(3)~~ Standard Form (SF) 15, Application for 10-Point Veteran Preference, and supporting documents.  
~~and supporting documents.~~

~~d.(4)~~ Letters or certificates from the Department of Veterans Affairs and statements or retirement orders issued by a branch of the Armed Forces to substantiate entitlement to the preference claimed.

~~**Note:** Applicants who claim veterans' preference status involving a veteran's disability are not asked to provide information related to the nature of the disability.~~

c. Applicants who fail to provide proof of entitlement at time of application must not be disqualified. Claimed veterans' preference points will be deducted if the claim cannot be adjudicated favorably by the time of selection.

**Note:** Applicants who claim veterans' preference status involving a veteran's disability are not asked to provide information related to the nature of the disability.

#### ~~484.2~~ 484.2 **Proof for Sole--Survivor Preference Claims**

Veterans claiming sole--survivor preference must provide:

- a. Proof of discharge from active--duty military service by reason of sole survivorship as that term is defined in the law; and
- b. Proof of active--duty service in one of the situations described in [Exhibit 483](#), with the exception that the veteran is not required to meet the length-of-service requirements.

#### ~~484.3~~ 484.3 **Proof for 5-Point Preference Claims**

Veterans claiming 5-point preference must provide proof of required service (see [Exhibit 483](#)) and a discharge under honorable conditions (see [232.3h](#)). (See [485](#) for adjudicating 5-point veterans' preference.)

#### ~~484.4~~ **Proof for 10-Point Preference Claims**

Eligibles claiming 10-point preference must provide proof by completing SF 15 and attaching the supporting documents described on the form--and other documentation that the Postal Service deems necessary. (See [486](#) for adjudicating claims for 10-point veterans' preference.)

## 485 **Adjudicating Claims for Sole Survivor or 5-Point Preference**

### 485.1 **Verifying Entitlement**

The veteran must present a copy of the appropriate DD Form 214, *Certificate of Release or Discharge From Active Duty*, or, if the employee served after August 20, 2009, DD Form 214, member 4 copy, showing length and character of service. ~~All~~ As verification of eligibility for the preference claimed, all applicants who have been separated from active duty in the Armed Forces should be able to produce a DD Form 214, DD Form 214, member 4 copy, or other certification issued by the branch of service ~~as verification of eligibility for the preference claimed.~~

The adjudicator verifies entitlement for sole survivor or 5-point preference by reviewing the DD Form 214, DD Form 214, member 4 copy, or other certification. The adjudicator determines whether the veteran meets the criteria in [483.1](#) or [483.2](#), and ~~either~~ approves or denies the claim.

If a claim for 5 points is denied, the 5 points are ~~taken away~~ removed, but the applicant remains eligible for consideration for the announced vacancy. An applicant claiming veterans' preference who is still on active duty will be granted 5-point preference if the following ~~applies~~ apply:

- a. The certification shows the applicant is expected to be discharged or released within 120 days; and
- b. The application shows that the applicant has the required U.S. military service, such as service in a war, campaign, or expedition.

### 485.2 **Campaign or Expeditionary Medal**

When a campaign or expeditionary medal is required, a veteran's DD Form 214, or DD Form 214, member 4 copy showing the award of an Armed Forces ~~Campaign~~ campaign or ~~Expeditionary Medal~~ expeditionary medal is acceptable proof. The ~~DD Form 214~~ Postal Service does not ~~have to require that the DD Form 214~~ show the name of the theater or country of service for which that medal was awarded.

**Note:** The Armed Forces Service Medal is not qualifying for veterans' preference. ([Exhibit 485](#) contains a complete list of campaigns and expeditions, ~~which comes. The list is~~ from information on "Vet Guide for HR Professionals" on the ~~VetGuide on the U.S.~~ Office of Personnel Management's website <https://www.opm.gov>.)

Exhibit 485

**Veterans' Preference-Qualifying Wars, Campaigns, and Expeditions of the Armed Forces That Qualify for Veterans' Preference**

*War Service Creditable for Veterans' Preference:*

In the absence of statutory definition for war and campaign or expedition, OPM considers to be wars only those armed conflicts for which a declaration of war was issued by Congress. The title 38, U.S.C., definition of period of war, which is used in determining benefits administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs, includes the Vietnam Era and other armed conflicts. That title 38 definition is not applicable for civil-service purposes.

Thus, the last war for which active duty is qualifying for veterans' preference is World War II. The inclusive dates for World War II service are December 7, 1941, through April 28, 1952.

*Noncombat operations that are not qualifying Operations That Are Not Qualifying for veterans' preference Veterans' Preference:*

Many medals are awarded for noncombat operations. These medals are not a basis for preference and include the following:

- a. Global War on Terrorism Service Medal for service from September 11, 2001, to date to be determined.
- b. The Medal of Merit for meritorious service in World War II.
- c. The Medal of Freedom for meritorious achievements or meritorious service to the United States on or after December 7, 1941, in the war against an enemy outside the continental limits of the United States.
- d. The Antarctica Service Medal for participating in a scientific, direct support, or exploratory operation on the Antarctic Continent.
- e. The National Defense Service Medal for honorable service between June 27, 1950, and July 27, 1954, or January 1, 1961, and August 14, 1974; or for the period between August 2, 1990, and November 30, 1995.
- f. The Armed Forces Service Medal for participation in a United States military operation deemed to be a significant activity for which there was no threat of encounter of foreign armed opposition or imminent threat of hostile action.
- g. The Armed Forces Reserve Medal for 10 years of honorable service in a Reserve component; or active-duty service in a Reserve component on or after August 1, 1990; or volunteer service for active duty on or after August 1, 1990.

*Military Operations Since 1937 for Which a Campaign or Expeditionary Medal Has Been Awarded, Except for Operations Occurring During a Declared War:*

Military personnel receive many awards and decorations. To help agencies make decisions concerning entitlement to veterans' preference and other benefits, the following list identifies those awards that are campaign and expeditionary medals. Any Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, whether listed here or not, is qualifying for veterans' preference. The Department of Defense, not OPM, determines who is entitled to receive a medal, and under what circumstances.

The list below is derived from DOD 1348.33-M, *Manual of Military Decorations and Awards*. Either a veteran's DD Form 214, *Certificate of Discharge or Separation from Active Duty*, or other official documents issued by the branch of service are required as verification of eligibility for veterans' preference.

**Qualifying Campaigns and Expeditions Which Qualify For for Veterans' Preference**

Campaign or Expedition	Inclusive Dates
<b>Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal (AFEM)</b> A veteran's DD Form 214 showing the award of any Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal is acceptable proof. <del>The</del> <u>It is not required that the</u> DD Form 214 <del>does not have to</del> show the name of the theater or country of service for which that medal was awarded.	N/A
Afghanistan (Operation Enduring Freedom)	September 11, 2001, to present
Afghanistan (Operation Iraqi Freedom)	March 19, 2003, to August 31, 2010
Berlin	August 14, 1961, to June 1, 1963
Bosnia (Operations Joint Endeavor, Joint Guard, and Joint Forge)	November 20, 1995, to December 20, 1996; December 20, 1996, to June 20, 1998; June 21, 1998 to present
Cambodia	March 29, 1973, to August 15, 1973
Cambodia Evacuation (Operation Eagle Pull)	April 11, 1975, to April 13, 1975
Congo	July 14, 1960, to September 1, 1962, and November 23, 1964, to November 27, 1964
Cuba	October 24, 1962, to June 1, 1963
Dominican Republic	April 28, 1965, to September 21, 1966
El Salvador	January 1, 1981, to February 1, 1992
Global War on Terrorism	September 11, 2001, to present
Grenada (Operation Urgent Fury)	October 23, 1983, to November 21, 1983
Haiti (Operation Uphold Democracy)	September 16, 1994, to March 31, 1995
Iraq (Operation Northern Watch)	January 1, 1997, to present
Iraq (Operation Desert Spring)	December 31, 1998, to December 31, 2002 (projected)
Iraq (Operation Enduring Freedom)	September 11, 2001, to present
Iraq (Operation Iraqi Freedom)	March 19, 2003, to August 31, 2010
Korea	October 1, 1966, to June 30, 1974
Kosovo	March 24, 1999, to present
Laos	April 19, 1961, to October 7, 1962
Lebanon	July 1, 1958, to November 1, 1958, and June 1, 1983, to December 1, 1987
Mayaguez Operation	May 15, 1975, to May 15, 1975
Operations in the Libyan Area (Operation Eldorado Canyon)	April 12, 1986, to April 17, 1986
Panama (Operation Just Cause)	December 20, 1989, to January 31, 1990
Persian Gulf Operation (Operation Earnest Will)	July 24, 1987, to August 1, 1990
Persian Gulf Operation (Operation Southern Watch)	December 1, 1995, to present
Persian Gulf Operation (Operation Vigilant Sentinel)	December 1, 1995, to February 1, 1997
Persian Gulf Operation (Operation Desert Thunder)	November 11, 1998, to December 22, 1998
Persian Gulf Operation (Operation Desert Fox)	December 16, 1998, to December 22, 1998
Persian Gulf Intercept Operation	December 1, 1995, to present
Quemoy and Matsu Islands	August 23, 1958, to June 1, 1963
Somalia (Operations Restore Hope and United Shield)	December 5, 1992, to March 31, 1995
Taiwan Straits	August 23, 1958, to January 1, 1959
Thailand	May 16, 1962, to August 10, 1962

Campaign or Expedition	Inclusive Dates
Vietnam Evacuation (Operation Frequent Wind)	April 29, 1975, to April 30, 1975
Vietnam (including Thailand)	July 1, 1958, to July 3, 1965

**Note:** Section 572 of Subtitle G of the Defense Authorization Act of Fiscal Year 1998 (Public Law 105-85), signed into law on November 18, 1997, allows the secretary of the U.S. military department concerned to determine whether individual members who participated in Operation Joint Endeavor or Operation Joint Guard in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina and in such other areas in the region as the secretaryU.S. Secretary of defenseDefense considers appropriate, meet the individual service requirements for award of the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal (AFEM). Generally, service members will be considered eligible if they:

- a. Were deployed to Bosnia and Herzegovina (or otheranother area that the secretaryU.S. Secretary of defenseDefense considers appropriate) in direct support of one or both of the operations;
- b. Served on board a ship in the Adriatic in direct support of one or both of the operations; or
- c. Operated in airspace above Bosnia, Herzegovina (or otheranother area that the secretaryU.S. Secretary of defenseDefense considers appropriate) while the operations were in effect.

### Navy Expeditionary Medal and Marine Corps Medal for These Operations

Campaign or Expedition	Inclusive Dates
Cuba	January 3, 1961, to October 23, 1962
Indian Ocean/Iran	November 21, 1979, to October 20, 1981
Iranian/Yemen/Indian Ocean	December 8, 1978, to June 6, 1979
Lebanon	August 20, 1982, to May 31, 1983
Liberia (Operation Sharp Edge)	August 5, 1990, to February 21, 1991
Libyan Area	January 20, 1986, to June 27, 1986
Panama	April 1, 1980, to December 19, 1986, and February 1, 1990, to June 13, 1990
Persian Gulf	February 1, 1987, to July 23, 1987
Rwanda (Operation Distant Runner)	April 7, 1994, to April 18, 1994
Thailand	May 16, 1962, to August 10, 1962

### Other Qualifying Campaign and Service Medals Qualifying for Veterans' Preference

Campaign or Expedition	Inclusive Dates
Army Occupation of Austria	May 9, 1945, to July 27, 1955
Army Occupation of Berlin	May 9, 1945, to October 2, 1990
Army Occupation of Germany (exclusive of Berlin)	May 9, 1945, to May 5, 1955
Army Occupation of Japan	September 3, 1945, to April 27, 1952
Chinese Service Medal (Extended)	September 2, 1945, to April 1, 1957
Korean Defense Service Medal	July 28, 1954, to (date to be determined)
Korean Service	June 27, 1950, to July 27, 1954
Kosovo Campaign Medal (KCM) Operation Allied Force	March 24, 1999, to June 10, 1999
Kosovo Campaign Medal (KCM) Operation Joint Guardian	June 11, 1999, to (date to be determined)
Kosovo Campaign Medal (KCM) Operation Allied Harbor	April 4, 1999, to September 1, 1999
Kosovo Campaign Medal (KCM) Operation Sustain Hope/ Shining Hope	April 4, 1999, to July 10, 1999
Kosovo Campaign Medal (KCM) Operation Noble Anvil	March 24, 1999, to July 20, 1999
Kosovo Campaign Medal (KCM) Task Force Hawk	April 5, 1999, to June 24, 1999
Kosovo Campaign Medal (KCM) Task Force Saber	March 31, 1999, to July 8, 1999
Kosovo Campaign Medal (KCM) Task Force Falcon	June 11, 1999, to (date to be determined)
Kosovo Campaign Medal (KCM) Task Force Hunter	April 1, 1999, to November 1, 1999
Navy Occupation of Austria	May 8, 1945, to October 25, 1954

Campaign or Expedition	Inclusive Dates
Navy Occupation of Trieste	May 8, 1945, to October 25, 1954
Southwest Asia Service Medal (SWASM) (Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm)	August 2, 1990, to November 30, 1995
Units of the Sixth Fleet (Navy)	May 9, 1945, to October 25, 1955
Vietnam Service Medal (VSM)	July 4, 1965, to March 28, 1973
Rwanda (Operation Distant Runner)	April 7, 1994, to April 18, 1994
Thailand	May 16, 1962, to August 10, 1962

## 486 Adjudicating Claims for 10-Point Preference

### 486.1 Nature of Discharge

Human Resources must verify the veteran's discharge under honorable conditions. A statement from the records of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs showing that the veteran was discharged under honorable conditions will meet this requirement.

Alternatively, the discharge may be verified from the character of service block on the DD Form 214, *Certificate of Release or Discharge Fromfrom Active Duty*. (See [232.3h](#) for a description of discharges under honorable conditions and discharges that do not meet the requirement.)

### 486.2 Documentation

#### [486.21](#) **General**

The adjudicator must have a fully completed SF 15 for any claim for 10-point preference. Applicants who claim 10-point preference must provide all ~~of the~~ documentation described on the SF 15 for the type of preference they ~~are~~ claiming claim, and other documentation that the Postal Service deems necessary.

Occasionally, applicants may submit a copy of a rating decision letter that contains medical information to support a claim for 10-point preference. In such instances, Human Resources ~~(a) acknowledges~~:

- a. Acknowledges receipt of the information; ~~(b) indicates~~
- b. Indicates successful adjudication of the claimed preference on the bottom of page one of SF 15; and ~~(c) promptly~~
- c. Promptly returns the document containing the medical information to the ~~veteran~~ applicant.

#### [486.21](#)[486.22](#) **Disabled Veterans' Preference**

The adjudicator determines if the documentation described on the SF 15 and the completed SF 15 submitted by the applicant provide sufficient proof for one of the following categories:

- a. *Compensable disability preference (CP)* — Has a compensable service-connected disability that is at least 10 percent but less than 30 percent.
- b. *Compensable 30 percent preference (CPS)* — Has a compensable service-connected disability that is 30 percent or more.
- c. *Disability preference (XP)* — (1) ~~has~~Has received a Purple Heart; (2) ~~has~~Has a current service-connected disability; or (3) ~~is~~Is receiving

Employment and Placement compensation, disability retirement benefits, or pension from the U.S. military or the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, but does not qualify as a CP or CPS.

#### 486.22486.23 **Spouse, Widow(er), or Parent Preference**

##### 486.231 **General**

Claims for spouse, widow, widower, or parent preference ~~are dependent~~depend on the current marital status of the claimant, as attested to on the SF 15. (A copy of the marriage license or certificate must always be included with the SF 15.)

Under the law, nonservice-connected disabilities cannot be considered in the allowance of spouse preference, even though the nonservice-connected disability is total or permanent.

##### 486.22486.232 **Claims for Spouse Preference**

National Human Resources is responsible for adjudicating claims for spouse preference. Requests for adjudication ~~should~~must be submitted with the applicant's SF 15 and all supporting documentation.

##### 486.222486.233 **Claims for Widow or Widower Preference**

National Human Resources is responsible for adjudicating preference claims for widows or widowers who meet the criteria listed in 483.323, Widows or Widowers of Veterans, ~~and have the~~ and have proof described on SF 15, including a copy of the marriage license or certificate.

##### 486.223486.234 **Claims for Parent Preference**

National Human Resources is responsible for adjudicating claims for parent preference. Requests for adjudication ~~should~~must be submitted with the applicant's completed SF 15 and all supporting documentation.

## 487 **Adjusting Veterans' Preference After Adjudication**

### 487.1 **Claimed Preference Adjustments**

If the preference points to which the veteran is entitled are different from the veteran's claim at the time of application, HRSSC the Human Resources Shared Service Center adjusts the score based on the proof presented by the eligible.

### 487.2 **Notification to Applicant When Claimed Preference Is Not Allowed**

In any instance where claimed preference is not proven and allowed, Human Resources informs the eligible in writing. If the final examination rating was adjusted, notification to the eligible must include the new rating.

### 487.3 **Return of Documents Presented for Proof**

After the preference has been adjudicated, all original documents submitted by the applicant as proof are returned to the applicant.

Occasionally, applicants may submit a copy of a rating decision letter that contains medical information to support a claim for 10-point preference. ~~In such instances, the adjudicator (a) acknowledges receipt of the information; (b) indicates successful adjudication of the claimed preference on the bottom of page one of SF 15; and (c) promptly returns the document containing the medical information to the veteran applicant.~~ In such



- a. Acknowledges receipt of the information;
- b. Indicates successful adjudication of the claimed preference on the bottom of page one of SF 15; and
- c. Promptly returns the document containing the medical information to the applicant.

**488 Appointment at Lesser Preference Level**

The hiring official can may select and appoint an applicant if, while the applicant's claim for preference is being adjudicated, the applicant is within reach for appointment as ranked with a lesser preference for which the applicant is entitled.

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# 4 Processing External Vacancy Announcements and Veterans' Preference Claims

## 41 Introduction

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### 411 General

This chapter is about the process used to:

- a. Announce Postal Service job vacancies to external applicants (see chapter 7 for more on Executive Administrative Schedule [EAS] job vacancies, and Handbook EL-304 for positions filled under the Maintenance Selection System [MSS]);
- b. Determine the order in which competitive job applicants are considered based on examination results (where applicable); and
- c. Adjudicate claims for veterans' preference.

### 412 Definitions

The following terms are defined as used in this chapter:

- a. *Selecting official* — The Human Resources employee or designee responsible for processing the job vacancy announcement.
- b. *Eligibles* — Applicants who meet a position's qualifications, including eligibility criteria and passing entrance examinations.
- c. *Vacancy announcement* — A job posting published manually or online soliciting applications from interested persons. A vacancy announcement typically contains the position title, location, position information, starting hourly rate or salary, functional purpose, qualifications and requirements, and contact information.
- d. *Veterans' preference* — Veterans' preference in its present form comes from the Veterans' Preference Act of 1944, as amended, and is codified in various provisions of Title 5, United States Code (U.S.C.). By law, veterans who are disabled or who served on active duty in the Armed Forces during certain specified time periods or in military campaigns are entitled to preference over others in hiring from competitive lists of eligibles. Preference categories and points are distinguished by the use of codes, as follows:
  - (1) Compensable 30 percent preference (CPS) — This code

MSS, see Handbook EL-304 for instructions pertaining to release of records associated with MSS.

A collective bargaining agent may request a copy of a hiring list when the agent represents the employees hired from the hiring list. Since applicants are not part of the bargaining unit (especially applicants who are not hired), identifying information for applicants not hired must be struck from a hiring list before it is provided to a collective bargaining agent. The information for applicants hired from a hiring list is relevant and must be provided if the hired applicants are in the same bargaining unit as the requesting union.

For more information about release of protected records, see Handbook AS-353, *Guide to Privacy, the Freedom of Information Act, and Records Management*.

## 42 Announcement and Application Process

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### 421 Announcing Vacancies

#### 421.1 When to Announce Vacancies

Selecting officials must announce vacancies when necessary to meet Postal Service staffing needs. When authorized to fill a vacant position externally, they must use the competitive selection process (see chapter 2). The selecting official starts the process to post the vacancy. Selecting officials must post external vacancies on [www.usps.com/careers](http://www.usps.com/careers).

#### 421.2 Announcement Period

Human Resources or Talent Acquisition are responsible for ensuring that external announcements are posted on [www.usps.com/careers](http://www.usps.com/careers) for a minimum of 3 to 5 calendar days.

#### 421.3 Attracting Applicants

The following apply:

- a. The announcement must include the following information about the position:
  - (1) Job title and pay grade.
  - (2) Functional purpose, duties and responsibilities, and position requirements.
  - (3) Duty station.
  - (4) Work hours and nonscheduled days.
  - (5) Employee health insurance benefits.
- b. See [421.4](#) regarding restricting the area of consideration.
- c. To attract diverse candidates, it is beneficial to partner with Diversity, Equity and Inclusion personnel (see [22](#) and [122](#)).
- d. Announcements must be posted online. To generate widespread publicity, announcements may also be distributed strategically for posting in the following:
  - (1) Public and employee bulletin boards in Post Offices and in

Processing External Vacancy Announcements and Veterans' Preference Claims 483.2  
as a service school by law, or by the secretary of the U.S.  
military department concerned.

### 433 **Applicants Not Meeting Examination Requirement**

#### 433.1 **General**

Applicants who do not achieve a passing score or who fail to complete the examination process are ineligible to be considered for the current vacancy or any other vacancies requiring the exam for which they applied. These applicants are:

- a. Notified that they are not eligible for the vacancy; and
- b. Given the date when they will be eligible to be retested.

#### 433.2 **Retest Optional**

An applicant may, but is not required to, retest on or after the retest date. To initiate a retest if the applicant chooses, the applicant must apply under another vacancy announcement requiring the same exam. If an applicant chooses to retest, the new result will be used for that and future applications, regardless of whether it is higher or lower than the previous result.

#### 433.3 **Retest Required**

An applicant must retest if the applicant applies for a job requiring the same examination after the expiration date of the applicant's prior examination result.

### 434 **Applicants Who Achieve a Passing Score**

Applicants who qualify on the required examination for a vacancy and meet other applicable eligibility requirements are known as "eligibles." Eligibles are ranked according to their final score (see subchapter 44).

### 435 **Effect of Veterans' Preference Claims**

External applicants may claim veterans' preference when they apply for a vacancy. Five or 10 points are added to the passing examination score or rating of an eligible who claims veterans' preference. Veterans' preference points are not added to ineligible (non-passing) examination scores.

Thus, veterans' preference affects the applicant's ranking relative to other applicants for the same vacancy, but does not convert a non-passing score to a passing score. To efficiently process applications, veterans' preference is adjudicated as early in the sequence of activities as possible when processing an external vacancy.

### 436 **Breaking Ties**

When two or more applicants within a group have the same final numerical rating, the tie is broken by:

- a. Placing XP-preference eligibles before TP-preference eligibles.
- b. Placing TP-preference eligibles before nonpreference eligibles.
- c. Using the number, from lowest to highest, randomly assigned to the candidate's application by the applicant-tracking system.

**444 Order for General Application File**

When selecting officials are filling vacancies that do not require an examination, applicants' names are sorted on the hiring list, and the applicants must be considered for employment by priority groups in the following order:

- a. *Group 1* — Persons entitled to 10-point preference who have a compensable service-connected disability of 10 percent or more.
- b. *Group 2* — All other persons entitled to veterans' preference.
- c. *Group 3* — All other applicants.

## 45 Other Applicant Processes

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**451 Change in Name, Address, or Veterans' Preference Claim**

Applicants are responsible for updating their contact information (such as name, address, phone numbers, and email addresses) and other information on their application or online account. The applicant is responsible for notifying the responsible Human Resources office if contact information or veterans' preference entitlement changes after an application is submitted.

When informed of a change, Human Resources will re-adjudicate veterans' preference and make adjustments to correct the eligible's standing on the hiring list, if appropriate (see [487](#)).

**452 Failure to Respond**

If an eligible fails to respond to an instruction, official correspondence, or request for information needed for an eligibility or suitability decision, Human Resources will disqualify the applicant for failure to respond to official correspondence.

## 46 Reserved

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## 47 Reserved

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## 48 Veterans' Preference

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### 481 Requirement

The Postal Service applies veterans' preference as required by Titles 5 and 39 U.S.C. and 5 Code of Federal Regulations for certain employment purposes, including appointment. Applicants claiming veterans' preference must provide dates of active-duty service and claim veterans' preference when applying for a vacancy.

The applicant is responsible for providing proof of entitlement to the preference claimed. If supporting documentation is not received with the application, Human Resources Shared Service Center notifies the eligible of the discrepancy. The applicant must present the supporting documentation by the time the selecting official considers the applicant's application. If the eligible indicates that the preference claimed was a mistake or has changed, Human Resources cancels and, if necessary, reissues the hiring list and adjusts the eligible's position.

No selection will be made from the hiring list until the adjudication process has been completed for all applicants who claim veterans' preference points.

### 482 Authority to Adjudicate Veterans' Preference

Veterans' preference points can make the difference in whether or not an applicant receives employment consideration; therefore, verifying entitlement to claimed preference is essential to providing fair and equitable treatment. This process is known as *adjudication*.

Most veterans' preference claims are adjudicated by the Human Resources Shared Service Center, the field Human Resources office, or a designee. Human Resources personnel confirm these determinations when Human Resources audits hiring lists. Cases involving preference as the spouse or parent of a veteran must be referred to National Human Resources (Headquarters) for adjudication.

### 483 Types of Veterans' Preference

#### 483.1 No-Point Preference

The following apply:

- a. A U.S. veteran discharged or released under honorable conditions from a period of active U.S. military duty after August 29, 2008, by reason of sole survivorship is eligible for preference in appointment. A sole-survivor discharge is defined as the separation of a member from the U.S. Armed Forces, at the request of the member, who is the only surviving child in a family in which the father, mother, or one or more siblings meets all of the following criteria:
  - (1) Served in the U.S. Armed Forces;
  - (2) Was killed; died as a result of wounds, accident, or disease; is in a captured or missing-in-action status; or is permanently 100 percent disabled or hospitalized on a continuing basis, and, as a result, is not employed gainfully; and

aggravated in the line of duty, or to veterans separated for hardship or other reasons under 10 U.S.C. 1171 or 1173 or 5 U.S.C. 2108(1)(D).

**Note:** The term *preference eligible* does not include, for reduction in force (RIF) purposes, most retired members of the U.S. Armed Forces. For exceptions to this general rule, refer to the U.S. Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) "Vet Guide for HR Professionals" at <https://www.opm.gov>. However, retired members of the U.S. Armed Forces may still be preference eligibles for adverse-action purposes. Active duty for training or inactive duty by National Guard or Reserve soldiers does not qualify as active duty for preference.

### 483.3 **Ten-Point Preference**

#### 483.31 **Disabled Veterans**

A U.S. veteran discharged or released from active duty under honorable conditions, who served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces at any time, may be assigned 10-point preference, provided the veteran meets the criteria in one of the following categories:

- a. *Compensable disability preference (CP)* — Has a compensable service-connected disability that is at least 10 percent but less than 30 percent.
- b. *Compensable 30 percent preference (CPS)* — Has a compensable service-connected disability that is 30 percent or more.
- c. *Disability preference (XP)* — (1) Has received a Purple Heart, or (2) Has a current service-connected disability or is receiving compensation, disability retirement benefits, or pension from the U.S. military or the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, but does not qualify as a CP or CPS.

#### 483.32 **Ten-Point Derived Preference (XP)**

##### 483.321 **General**

Spouses, widows, widowers, or parents of U.S. veterans are eligible for 10 points as described in 483.322, 483.323, and 483.324. This type of preference is derived preference because it is based on service of a veteran who is not able to use the preference through unemployment or death.

##### 483.322 **Spouses of Disabled Veterans**

The spouse of a U.S. Armed Forces veteran on whose service a claim is based is eligible for 10-point veterans' preference provided both of the following criteria are met:

- a. The veteran served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces at any time and was discharged or released from active duty under honorable conditions.
- b. The veteran has a service-connected disability and is disqualified for a federal position along the general lines of the veteran's usual occupation. Such a disqualification may be presumed when the veteran is unemployed, provided one of the following criteria is met:
  - (1) Has been rated by appropriate military or Department of Veterans Affairs authorities to be 100 percent disabled or unemployable.
  - (2) Has retired, been separated, or resigned from a civil-service position on the basis of a disability that is service-connected in

- (2) Is reviewed and adjudicated by the time of selection.
- b. Adjudication of preference requires reviewing and comparing the following:
  - (1) PS Form 2591, *Application for Employment*.
  - (2) DD Form 214, *Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty*, or if the employee served after August 20, 2009, DD 214 member 4, copy or other official documents issued by the branch of service that certifies that the service member is expected to be discharged or released from active duty service in the Armed Forces under honorable conditions. This must occur no later than 120 days after the date the certification is submitted for consideration in the hiring process.
  - (3) Standard Form (SF) 15, Application for 10-Point Veteran Preference, and supporting documents.
  - (4) Letters or certificates from the Department of Veterans Affairs and statements or retirement orders issued by a branch of the Armed Forces to substantiate entitlement to the preference claimed.
- c. Applicants who fail to provide proof of entitlement at time of application must not be disqualified. Claimed veterans' preference points will be deducted if the claim cannot be adjudicated favorably by the time of selection.

**Note:** Applicants who claim veterans' preference status involving a veteran's disability are not asked to provide information related to the nature of the disability.

#### 484.2 **Proof for Sole-Survivor Preference Claims**

Veterans claiming sole-survivor preference must provide:

- a. Proof of discharge from active-duty military service by reason of sole survivorship as that term is defined in the law; and
- b. Proof of active-duty service in one of the situations described in [Exhibit 483](#), with the exception that the veteran is not required to meet the length-of-service requirements.

#### 484.3 **Proof for 5-Point Preference Claims**

Veterans claiming 5-point preference must provide proof of required service (see [Exhibit 483](#)) and a discharge under honorable conditions (see [232.3h](#)). (See [485](#) for adjudicating 5-point veterans' preference.)

#### 484.4 **Proof for 10-Point Preference Claims**

Eligibles claiming 10-point preference must provide proof by completing SF 15 and attaching the supporting documents described on the form, and other documentation that the Postal Service deems necessary. (See [486](#) for adjudicating claims for 10-point veterans' preference.)

## 485 **Adjudicating Claims for Sole-Survivor or 5-Point Preference**

### 485.1 **Verifying Entitlement**

The veteran must present a copy of the appropriate DD Form 214, *Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty*, or if the employee served after August 20, 2009, DD 214 member 4 copy, showing length and character of service. As verification of eligibility for the preference claimed, all applicants who have been separated from active duty in the Armed Forces should be able to produce a DD Form 214, DD 214 member 4 copy, or other certification issued by the branch of service.

The adjudicator verifies entitlement for sole-survivor or 5-point preference by reviewing the DD Form 214, DD 214 member 4 copy, or other certification. The adjudicator determines whether the veteran meets the criteria in 483.1 or 483.2, and approves or denies the claim.

If a claim for 5 points is denied, the 5 points are removed, but the applicant remains eligible for consideration for the announced vacancy. An applicant claiming veterans' preference who is still on active duty will be granted 5-point preference if the following apply:

- a. The certification shows the applicant is expected to be discharged or released within 120 days; and
- b. The application shows that the applicant has the required U.S. military service, such as service in a war, campaign, or expedition.

### 485.2 **Campaign or Expeditionary Medal**

When a campaign or expeditionary medal is required, a veteran's DD Form 214, or DD 214 member 4 copy showing the award of an Armed Forces campaign or expeditionary medal is acceptable proof. The Postal Service does not require that the DD Form 214 show the name of the theater or country of service for which that medal was awarded.

**Note:** The Armed Forces Service Medal is not qualifying for veterans' preference. (Exhibit 485 contains a complete list of campaigns and expeditions. The list is from information on "Vet Guide for HR Professionals" on the U.S. Office of Personnel Management's website <https://www.opm.gov>.)

**Qualifying Campaigns and Expeditions for Veterans' Preference**

Campaign or Expedition	Inclusive Dates
<b>Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal (AFEM)</b> A veteran's DD Form 214 showing the award of any Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal is acceptable proof. It is not required that the DD Form 214 show the name of the theater or country of service for which that medal was awarded.	N/A
Afghanistan (Operation Enduring Freedom)	September 11, 2001, to present
Afghanistan (Operation Iraqi Freedom)	March 19, 2003, to August 31, 2010
Berlin	August 14, 1961, to June 1, 1963
Bosnia (Operations Joint Endeavor, Joint Guard, and Joint Forge)	November 20, 1995, to December 20, 1996; December 20, 1996, to June 20, 1998; June 21, 1998 to present
Cambodia	March 29, 1973, to August 15, 1973
Cambodia Evacuation (Operation Eagle Pull)	April 11, 1975, to April 13, 1975
Congo	July 14, 1960, to September 1, 1962, and November 23, 1964, to November 27, 1964
Cuba	October 24, 1962, to June 1, 1963
Dominican Republic	April 28, 1965, to September 21, 1966
El Salvador	January 1, 1981, to February 1, 1992
Global War on Terrorism	September 11, 2001, to present
Grenada (Operation Urgent Fury)	October 23, 1983, to November 21, 1983
Haiti (Operation Uphold Democracy)	September 16, 1994, to March 31, 1995
Iraq (Operation Northern Watch)	January 1, 1997, to present
Iraq (Operation Desert Spring)	December 31, 1998, to December 31, 2002 (projected)
Iraq (Operation Enduring Freedom)	September 11, 2001, to present
Iraq (Operation Iraqi Freedom)	March 19, 2003, to August 31, 2010
Korea	October 1, 1966, to June 30, 1974
Kosovo	March 24, 1999, to present
Laos	April 19, 1961, to October 7, 1962
Lebanon	July 1, 1958, to November 1, 1958, and June 1, 1983, to December 1, 1987
Mayaguez Operation	May 15, 1975, to May 15, 1975
Operations in the Libyan Area (Operation Eldorado Canyon)	April 12, 1986, to April 17, 1986
Panama (Operation Just Cause)	December 20, 1989, to January 31, 1990
Persian Gulf Operation (Operation Earnest Will)	July 24, 1987, to August 1, 1990
Persian Gulf Operation (Operation Southern Watch)	December 1, 1995, to present
Persian Gulf Operation (Operation Vigilant Sentinel)	December 1, 1995, to February 1, 1997
Persian Gulf Operation (Operation Desert Thunder)	November 11, 1998, to December 22, 1998
Persian Gulf Operation (Operation Desert Fox)	December 16, 1998, to December 22, 1998
Persian Gulf Intercept Operation	December 1, 1995, to present
Quemoy and Matsu Islands	August 23, 1958, to June 1, 1963
Somalia (Operations Restore Hope and United Shield)	December 5, 1992, to March 31, 1995
Taiwan Straits	August 23, 1958, to January 1, 1959
Thailand	May 16, 1962, to August 10, 1962

Campaign or Expedition	Inclusive Dates
Navy Occupation of Trieste	May 8, 1945, to October 25, 1954
Southwest Asia Service Medal (SWASM) (Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm)	August 2, 1990, to November 30, 1995
Units of the Sixth Fleet (Navy)	May 9, 1945, to October 25, 1955
Vietnam Service Medal (VSM)	July 4, 1965, to March 28, 1973
Rwanda (Operation Distant Runner)	April 7, 1994, to April 18, 1994
Thailand	May 16, 1962, to August 10, 1962

## 486 Adjudicating Claims for 10-Point Preference

### 486.1 Nature of Discharge

Human Resources must verify the veteran's discharge under honorable conditions. A statement from the records of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs showing that the veteran was discharged under honorable conditions will meet this requirement.

Alternatively, the discharge may be verified from the character of service block on the DD Form 214, *Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty*. (See [232.3h](#) for a description of discharges under honorable conditions and discharges that do not meet the requirement.)

### 486.2 Documentation

#### 486.21 General

The adjudicator must have a fully completed SF 15 for any claim for 10-point preference. Applicants who claim 10-point preference must provide all documentation described on the SF 15 for the type of preference they claim, and other documentation that the Postal Service deems necessary.

Occasionally, applicants may submit a copy of a rating decision letter that contains medical information to support a claim for 10-point preference. In such instances, Human Resources:

- a. Acknowledges receipt of the information;
- b. Indicates successful adjudication of the claimed preference on the bottom of page one of SF 15; and
- c. Promptly returns the document containing the medical information to the applicant.

### 486.22 Disabled Veterans' Preference

The adjudicator determines if the documentation described on the SF 15 and the completed SF 15 submitted by the applicant provide sufficient proof for one of the following categories:

- a. *Compensable disability preference (CP)* — Has a compensable service-connected disability that is at least 10 percent but less than 30 percent.
- b. *Compensable 30 percent preference (CPS)* — Has a compensable service-connected disability that is 30 percent or more.
- c. *Disability preference (XP)* — (1) Has received a Purple Heart; (2) Has a current service-connected disability; or (3) Is receiving compensation, disability retirement benefits, or pension from the U.S.



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