

LABOR RELATIONS



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November 26, 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 7, sections 71,72 and 76 *Assignment, Reassignment, and Promotion*.

The intent of the revisions is to provide clarity on the Postal Service's policies, new structure and hiring responsibilities. Clarification was also provided for leadership roles and responsibilities.

Enclosed are copies of the revised changes to Handbook EL-312 sections 71,72 and 76, 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, appearing to read "B. Nicholson", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Bruce A. Nicholson
Director
Labor Relations Policies and Programs

Enclosures

7 Assignment, Reassignment, and Promotion

71 Introduction

711 Organization

Most Postal Service positions are filled by qualified career employees (excluding new hires) through assignment, reassignment, and/or promotion. This chapter focuses on the policies and procedures governing in-service placement and qualification standards, as follows:

- a. [72](#) — Bargaining Positions.
- b. [73](#) — Reserved.
- c. [74](#) — Nonbargaining Positions (including Executive and Administrative Schedule ~~{[EAS]}~~, Management Pay Band, Technical Pay Band, Inspection Service Law Enforcement ~~{[ISLE]}~~ and Attorney Compensation System [\[ACS\]](#) positions).
- d. [75](#) — Supervisor Selection Process.
- e. [76](#) — Bargaining ~~Position-Job~~-Qualification Standards.
- f. [77](#) — Employment Restoration After Military Service.

712 **Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Employment Policy**

The following is Postal Service policy:

- a. Selections for positions to be filled by assignment, reassignment, or promotion will:
 - (1) Comply with the provisions of applicable collective bargaining agreements; and
 - (2) Be based on merit and the relevant experience, training, knowledge, skills, and abilities required for the positions being filled.
- b. All employees and applicants for employment will be afforded equal opportunities in employment without regard to race, color, sex (including pregnancy, sexual orientation, and gender identity, including transgender status), national origin, religion, age (40 or over), genetic information, disability, or retaliation for engaging in EEO-protected activity as provided by law. As part of its program of equal employment opportunity, the Postal Service prohibits discrimination or harassment based on any of these categories.

- c. The Postal Service also prohibits discrimination or harassment based on political affiliation; marital status; status as a parent; and past, present, or future military service.

713 **Exclusions and Limitations**

713.1 **Exclusions**

The provisions of this chapter specifically exclude:

- a. *Postal Career Executive Service (PCES) positions.*
- b. *Restricted positions.* The provisions on filling positions restricted to preference eligibles do not apply to in-service placements of career employees. (See [232.52](#), "Positions Restricted to Applicants Eligible for Veterans' Preference.")
- c. *Veterans' Preference.* Does not apply to the internal placement of career employees. However, veterans' preference does apply to external applicants.

713.2 **Limitations**

Eligibility for consideration to some positions is limited to employees in specific levels, occupations, geographic areas, or organizations.

714 **Selection: Definitions and Philosophy**

714.1 **Definitions**

The following definitions clarify and standardize the terms used in the selection process:

- a. *Requirements.* The knowledge, skills, abilities, experiences, and physical and other conditions that pertain to a specific position or duty assignment. The following apply:
 - (1) Not all these requirements are appropriate for every position; only ~~those~~ requirements that an individual needs to successfully perform the duties of a position upon entry ~~are used~~ apply.
 - (2) Employees fully meet the physical requirements of a position if they are physically able to perform the essential functions of the position, with or without reasonable accommodation where appropriate, and without posing a direct threat of harm to themselves or others. (See Handbook EL-307, *Reasonable Accommodation, An Interactive Process*.)
- b. *Qualifications.* The knowledge, skills, abilities, experience, and physical and other conditions that pertain to the applicant or bidder. The following apply:
 - (1) Applicants and bidders must meet the requirements, which means that they must possess the qualifications (e.g., the knowledge, skills, and abilities) that are required for the position.

- (2) Bidders must demonstrate that they possess *each* of these qualifications at a level that is sufficient for satisfactory (as opposed to unsatisfactory) performance in the position.
 - (3) The timing for meeting the requirements for senior qualified positions is ~~discussed~~described in 727.5, "Timing and Sequence of Evaluation."
- c. *Special conditions.* Conditions that apply only to nonbargaining positions. They describe the circumstances under which the work is performed. Being able to meet a special condition is essential to satisfactory performance at entry. Often conditions pertain to the willingness of the applicant to perform certain duties or tasks (e.g., willingness to travel frequently, or to work irregular hours).
 - d. *Special requirements.* Requirements that apply only to bargaining positions. These are stated as knowledge, skills, or abilities required for a specific job assignment. Special requirements may be added locally and used in addition to the qualification standard for the position.
 - e. *Qualification standard.* The official document that identifies the requirements of a bargaining position that are needed at entry. Qualification standards do not necessarily contain a complete list of requirements for continued satisfactory performance in a specific position.
 - f. *Desirable qualification.* Qualification that applies only to best qualified positions. ~~It is a~~ knowledge, skill, or ability that is not a mandatory requirement of a position, but one that would be beneficial in performing the duties of a specific job. (~~This a~~Applies only to best qualified positions.)
 - g. *Factors.* A cluster of related knowledge, skills, and abilities evaluated as a single requirement. Factors apply only in postmaster selection.
 - h. *Job posting (bid posting).* A posting for ~~the~~ filling ~~of~~ a senior qualified-bid bargaining position. A job ~~posting~~ announcement contains one of the following:
 - (1) ~~A list of requirements for entry to the position;~~
 - (2) ~~The qualification standard number; or~~
 - (3) ~~An attached qualification standard.~~
 - (1) Job title and pay grade;
 - (2) Occupation code;
 - (3) Functional purpose;
 - (4) Job duties and responsibilities (description of the work); and
 - (5) Qualification standards.
 - i. *Vacancy announcement.* An announcement for ~~the~~ filling ~~of~~ entrance positions, best qualified positions, or nonbargaining positions. A vacancy announcement contains one of the following:
 - (4) ~~A list of requirements for entry to the position;~~
 - (5) ~~The qualification standard number; or~~

~~(6) — An attached qualification standard.~~

~~(1) Job title and pay grade;~~

~~(2) Occupation code;~~

~~(3) Functional purpose;~~

~~(4) Job duties and responsibilities (description of the work); and~~

~~(5) Qualification standards.~~

Vacancy announcements do not necessarily contain a complete list of requirements for continued satisfactory performance in a position.

714.2 **Philosophy**

The philosophy underlying all selections is that a person placed into a position must be qualified — that is, must meet the requirements of the position. For senior qualified positions, selection is based on a determination of whether the senior bidder is qualified. For best qualified and nonbargaining positions, selection is based on a determination of who is best qualified ~~based on the basis of~~ total qualifications.

714.3 **Reasonable Accommodations in the Selection Process**

Reasonable accommodation for qualified applicants with disabilities can take many forms. (See Handbook EL-307, *Reasonable Accommodation, An Interactive Process*.) Accommodations that may be needed during the selection process include, but are not limited to providing the following:

a. ~~W~~Providing written materials in accessible formats.

b. ~~S~~Providing sign language interpreters.

c. ~~Ensuring that~~ Accessible locations for recruitment, interviews, performance ~~test~~examinations, and other components of the process ~~are held in accessible locations.~~

~~d. — Providing or modifying equipment or devices.~~

~~e. d. Adjusting or modifying applications~~ Equipment or devices that accommodate the applicant's disability or have been modified to accommodate the applicant's disability.

e. Applications and employment questionnaires that have been adjusted or modified to accommodate the applicant's disability.

715 **Use ofUsing Penalty Mail for Applications**

Only current bargaining ~~postal~~ Postal Service employees may forward job applications and job bids by penalty mail if the application or bid is in response to an official Postal Service job announcement.

716 **Positions Filled Temporarily**

716.1 **General**

When a career employee is temporarily absent, ~~his or her~~ that employee's position may be filled by temporary assignment, reassignment, or promotion. The applicant must understand the terms of such an assignment — specifically, that when the absent employee returns, the applicant returns

to the position ~~he or she~~ the applicant occupied ~~prior to before~~ the temporary assignment. (See 716.23, Conditions of the Temporary Promotion)-716.34, "Conditions of Temporary Promotion.")

Examples of temporary absences of an incumbent that justify filling a position temporarily include the following:

- a. Serving active military duty.
- b. Serving as a national officer of a ~~postal~~ Postal Service employee organization.
- c. Being temporarily assigned and/or promoted to another position.
- d. Being appointed as an officer-in-charge.

716.42 **Temporary Assignments**

716.21 **General**

Temporary assignment is the placement of an employee into an established position for a limited time ~~period of time~~ to perform duties and responsibilities other than those contained in the employee's ~~normal~~ regular position description. A formal reassignment and/or promotion personnel action is not required.

716.422 **Temporary Bargaining Assignments**

Unless stated in the relevant collective bargaining agreement, employees in temporary bargaining assignments must meet the qualification standards for the positions to which they are assigned. When the relevant collective bargaining agreement contains specific provisions regarding higher-level bargaining assignments, these provisions must be followed.

716.4223 **Temporary Assignments to Nonbargaining Positions**

The following general policies apply to temporary assignments to nonbargaining positions:

- a. Temporary assignments to nonbargaining positions are made only for the shortest practical time limits and may be used to meet emergencies caused by abnormal workload, a change in mission or organization, or unanticipated absences.
- b. When a nonbargaining employee is absent (except a postmaster), every effort must be made ~~to have the duties absorbed by~~ for other employees of the same or higher level to absorb the absent employee's duties.
- c. The ~~appointing~~ selecting official or designee may temporarily assign any qualified employee to meet service needs.
- d. ~~Normally, Typically,~~ consideration is given to unassigned employees (i.e., employees whose positions have been abolished).
- e. A temporary assignment may be terminated at any time, ~~either~~ at management's discretion or at the employee's request.
- f. Temporary assignment of an employee to a position at the same or lower level should not exceed 90 calendar days, unless extended by the next higher level of management above the detailed position. (See

716.143716.253 through 716.145716.255 for time limits on temporary assignment to a higher-level position.)

- g. Temporary assignments must be documented using PS Form 1723, *Assignment Order*.

Temporary Assignment Duration Approvers

Temporary Assignment Duration	Approver	Reference
Up to <u>and including</u> 29 days	Appointing <u>Selecting</u> official or designee.	716.12(c) <u>716.23(c)</u>
30 days or more involving travel or higher-level pay	Next higher-level (NHL) manager over the manager of the position ^{*,*}	716.142 <u>716.252</u> F-15 4-1.2.1
90 days or more involving higher-level pay	NHL of management above the detailed position ^{*,*}	716.143 <u>716.253</u> <u>53</u>
120 days or more involving higher-level pay	If <u>the</u> detailee is not a candidate for the position to which detailed, <i>NHL manager over the manager with the vacancy</i> can approve <u>the</u> extension ^{*,*} . If <u>the</u> detailee is a candidate for the position to which detailed, the assignment must be terminated before the 121 st day.	716.144 <u>716.254</u> <u>54</u>
Exceeding 1 year	Prior <u>written</u> approval in advance and in writing from <u>the vice president of Area Vice-President Retail & Delivery Operations, vice president of Regional Processing, or vice president of Logistics</u> (for field detail assignments)), or the functional officer (for detail to a Headquarters <u>and Headquarters Field</u> position), with notification to the Vice President). The approving manager must notify the vice president, Controller.	716.145 <u>716.255</u> F-15 2-2.1.2

*Exception: If the detail assignment was originally approved by a PCES manager, further approval is not necessary.

716.4324 Temporary Assignment to Higher Level — Bargaining

See 716.22, "Temporary Bargaining Assignments."

716.4425 Temporary Assignment to Higher Level — Nonbargaining

716.44251 Necessity

No one may be temporarily assigned to a higher-level nonbargaining position unless such an assignment is absolutely essential to the effective operations of the Postal Service, and the person selected assumes the full core responsibilities of the higher-level position.

Approval is required (~~See~~ Exhibit 716.12 (~~ee~~ Exhibit 716.23 and sSections 716.143 716.253 to 716.145)-716.255.)

716.44252 Higher-Management-Level Approval for Assignments of More Than 30 Calendar Days

When a temporary assignment or detail requiring travel and related expenses, or higher-level pay, is expected to last longer than 30 calendar days, the manager of the position must obtain approval from the next higher-level manager (unless a PCES manager originally approved the detail assignment). The request for approval for an extended-duty assignment or detail requiring extended travel away from the employee's permanent duty station must include the following information:

- a. Purpose of the assignment or detail;
- b. Cost;
- c. Benefit(s) expected;
- d. Consideration of alternatives; and
- e. Value to the Postal Service.

See also Handbook F-15, sSections 2-2.1.2 and 4-1.2.1.

716.143253 **Higher-Level Assignments Limited to 90 Calendar Days Unless**

Extended Temporary assignment to a higher-level position, during the absence of the incumbent, is limited to a maximum period of 90 calendar days. The period may be extended with advance approval of the next higher level of management above the detailed position. *Exception:* If a PCES manager originally approved the detail assignment, then approval of the extension is not required.

See [716.142716.252](#) for requirements when the temporary position or detail to a higher-level position also involves travel away from the employee's permanent duty station. See [716.254716.144](#) and [743.16](#) when the higher-level temporary assignment is to a vacant position.

716.144254 **120-Day Time Limit**

Temporary assignment to a higher-level vacant position, *pending selection of a person for permanent placement*, is limited to a total of not more than 120 calendar days. If the employee on temporary assignment could become or is a potential candidate for the vacant position, the higher-grade assignment must be terminated before the 121st day.

If the employee is not a candidate, the next higher-level manager over the manager with the vacancy may approve an extension of that employee's temporary assignment beyond 120 days, until a selection is made and the new employee assumes the position.

Exception: If a PCES manager originally approved the detail assignment, then approval of the extension is not required. See [743.16](#), [Exceptions to the 120-Calendar-Day Limit](#), "[Exceptions to the 120-Calendar-Day Limit](#)," for exceptions.

716.145255 **Temporary Assignments Exceeding 1 Year**

Temporary assignments exceeding 1 year, including those that involve travel and associated expenses, require advance written approval in writing from one of the following:

- a. The vice president of Area Vice President Retail & Delivery Operations;
- b. The vice president of Regional Processing;
- c. The vice president of Logistics (for detail to a field position); or the
- d. The functional officer (for detail to a Headquarters and Headquarters Field position).

There must be a critical need to extend a temporary assignment beyond 1 year. The approving manager will notify the vice president, Controller, of the approval to ensure travel reimbursements are handled as required by law.

See Handbook F-15, sSection 2-2.1.2, for approval requirements, and notification requirements, and tax consequences of detail assignments exceeding 1 year.

716.23 **Temporary Promotion and Promotion to a Temporary Position**

716.31 **General**

In this section, "temporary promotion" refers to both temporary promotions to a nonbargaining position, and promotion to a temporary nonbargaining position.

Temporary promotion to a nonbargaining position which that has no time limitation is limited to situations wherewhen it is impractical to fill a higher-

level position by other temporary means. Such situations include, but are not limited to the following:

(a.) ~~Long-term absence of the incumbent;~~ or

(b.) ~~Aa need to defer the permanently filling of a vacant position for a lengthy period of time period.~~

Promotion to a temporary nonbargaining position is limited to situations wherewhen the position is authorized for a specific limited duration to serve a temporary or transitional need.

~~In this section, "temporary promotion" refers to both temporary promotions to a nonbargaining position and promotion to a temporary nonbargaining position.~~

716.2432 **Selection Procedures**

Competitive procedures are used to fill a position through a temporary promotion. The vacancy announcement must clearly indicatestate that the appointment will not exceed a stated period. When the position is filled permanently, competitive or noncompetitive procedures may be used (see 743). An employee who has served in a position through competitive temporary promotion is eligible to re compete for the position, regardless of the duration of the temporary promotion.

716.2233 **Appointment Duration**

A temporary promotion may be made for a limited period, usually two2 years or less, depending upon need. If the employee's services are still needed in the assignment after the initial period expires, the employee may continue to serve, but it must be determined whether the situation is still temporary or whether the position should be filled permanently. A temporary promotion:

- a. May not exceed one1 year without approval of one of the areafollowing:
 - (1) The vice president (of Area Retail & Delivery Operations;
 - (2) The vice president of Regional Processing;
 - (3) The vice president of Logistics (for field detail assignments); or
 - (4) The functional officer (for a headquartersHeadquarters and Headquarters Field position).-See
The approving manager must notify the vice president, Controller (see 716.445255 when travel is involved);
- b. Is documented on a PS Form 50, *Personnel Action*;
- c. Terminates on a specified date, unless extended;
- d. May be terminated at any time based on the needs of the Postal Service; and
- e. Does not make the employee ineligible to compete for the vacancy if the position is posted.

716.2334 **Conditions of the Temporary Promotion**

Applicants for temporary promotion must be informed of the conditions of the placement, including the expected duration. An employee selected for a temporary promotion will be required to sign an agreement covering the terms of the temporary promotion.

The purpose of the agreement will be to avoid any misunderstanding as to

the conditions of the temporary promotion. The agreement must state that by accepting promotion to the temporary position, the position becomes the employee's position of record; ~~and.~~ The agreement must also address:

- a. The effect on the employee's salary during the temporary promotion;
- b. Relocation benefits, if any;
- c. Security clearance requirements, if applicable;
- d. The employee's ability to apply for other positions, including lateral reassignment at the grade of the position to which temporarily promoted; ~~and~~
- e. Reassignment to a comparable nonbargaining position at the end of the temporary promotion; ~~and.~~

~~That if prior to the termination of~~ before the temporary promotion is terminated, the competitive area where the position is located undergoes a reduction in force (RIF), the employee's rights are determined based on that position, not under the agreement ~~he or she~~ that the employee signed.

717 Positions Filled Permanently

717.1 Reassignment

Reassignment is the permanent assignment with or without relocation of an employee to another established position with the same level in the same salary schedule, or to a position with an equivalent level in another salary schedule. The following policies apply to reassignment:

- a. *Reassignment to a bargaining position.* General policies and procedures governing reassignments to bargaining positions are contained in the applicable collective bargaining agreement. (See 72, "Bargaining Positions," and 76, "Bargaining Position-Job-Qualification Standards," for detailed policies and procedures.)
- b. *Reassignment to a nonbargaining position.* The following apply:
 - (1) Management may reassign nonbargaining employees noncompetitively (see 743.11).
 - (2) Employees with saved grade may be considered noncompetitively for positions up to the level of their former position or at any intervening level.
 - (3) Employees who desire reassignment may also apply in the same way as employees who desire promotion consideration. ~~-~~ Additionally, an
 - (4) An employee with a disability who desires reassignment should work through the appropriate Reasonable Accommodation Committee at the district, area, or headquarters level.
- c. *Mutual exchanges.* Career bargaining employees may exchange positions at the same level, if the exchange is approved by management at the installations involved, subject to the provisions of the applicable collective bargaining agreement. An exchange of positions does not necessarily mean that the employees involved take over the duty assignments of the positions.

Exclusions: Part-time flexible employees may not exchange positions with full-time employees, or bargaining employees with nonbargaining employees, or nonsupervisory employees with supervisory employees.

717.2 **Unassigned Employees**

Employees whose positions have been abolished are assigned in accordance with *Employee and Labor Relations Manual* (ELM) [section 354](#), "Assignment of Unassigned Employees."

717.3 **Promotion**

717.31 **General**

A *promotion* is the permanent assignment with or without relocation of an employee to an established position with a higher level than the employee's previous position, or to an established position with a higher than equivalent level in another schedule (see ELM [section 413](#), "Promotion to Nonbargaining Unit Positions"). Restrictions on the promotion, or recommendation for promotion, of immediate relatives of nonbargaining employees are [set forth described](#) in Chapter [5](#). The following policies apply to promotion:

- a. *Promotion to a bargaining position.* General principles governing promotions to bargaining positions are contained in the applicable collective bargaining agreement. (See [72](#), "Bargaining Positions.")
- b. *Promotion to a nonbargaining position.* General policies and procedures governing promotions to nonbargaining positions are contained in ELM [section 350](#), "Assignment, Reassignment, and Promotion." (See [73 through -75](#) of this handbook for specific policies.)

717.3132 **Competitive Procedures**

Except as otherwise indicated, competitive procedures apply to all permanent promotions.

717.32 717.33 **Exceptions to Competitive Procedures**

The following promotion actions are exempted from competitive promotion procedures:

- a. Promotion of an incumbent to a position reclassified at a higher level without significant change in duties and responsibilities.
- b. Promotion and assignment of current nonbargaining employees to higher-level nonbargaining positions under the [specific](#) conditions described in [74](#). This includes employees with retreat rights, those previously reduced in level, or those serving with saved grade.
- c. Promotion of an employee who satisfactorily completes an approved training program that specifically provides for promotion, if:
 - (1) ~~the~~ the employee was selected for the program under competitive procedures; and
 - (2) ~~the~~ the fact that selection could lead to promotion was made known to potential candidates for the program.

717.4 **Change to Lower Level**

Management may approve a nonbargaining employee's voluntary request for change to a vacant nonbargaining position at a lower grade consistent with [section 743.11](#) and *Employee and Labor Relations Manual* ELM [section 354.23\(f\)](#). An employee with a disability who desires noncompetitive change to a lower-level nonbargaining position should work through the appropriate Reasonable Accommodation Committee at the

district, area, or headquarters level.

717.5 Absent Employees

717.51 Not on Active Military Duty

Employees on extended leave, including leave without pay, will also be considered, provided they are otherwise eligible and have applied for promotion. If the employee is selected for promotion, the personnel action is processed upon return to Postal Service duty. The date placed on the personnel action is the date the promotion would have occurred had the employee not been absent.

717.52 On Active Military Duty

717.521 Bidding on Positions

While on active military duty, employees continue to gain seniority and may bid on positions that become vacant during the employee's absence. A written or electronic notice must be submitted by the employee to Human Resources, or if appropriate, to the manager in charge, such as the postmaster, indicating the employee's interest to bid on specific positions.

The following also apply:

- a. The bid must be processed and awarded in accordance with the appropriate collective bargaining agreement *as if the employee is actively employed*. If the position is awarded, a personnel action is initiated to place the employee in the newly gained position and pay scale and to assure that seniority is credited as specified by the appropriate collective bargaining agreement.
- b. Unsuccessful bids are retained until the desired position is gained or the employee resumes active employment upon return from the military service.
- c. Training is deferred until they return for employees who gain a position for which there is contractually required training until they return. Upon their return, the employees will be required, pursuant to in accordance with the respective collective bargaining agreement, to meet the training requirements.
- d. No personnel action is to be initiated until the employee completes the training requirement is completed. In these cases, every effort must be made to train the employee upon return to work. The employee would only be awarded the position upon satisfactory completion of the required training.
- e. An audit trail documenting the bid submissions must be maintained.

717.522 Nonbargaining Positions

To be considered for nonbargaining positions, nNonbargaining and bargaining employees on military duty who are interested in being considered for nonbargaining positions are required to must submit to Human Resources personnel a completed cCandidate pProfile for vacancies in desired positions and locations. Human Resources personnel will treat the profile as if it were an application when there is a vacancy in the desired position and location. The following also apply:

- a. The application is considered in accordance with the area of consideration noted on the announcement.
- b. Applications resulting in a nonselection are reconsidered for other vacancies as they occur in the desired position and location, until the

applicant has been successfully selected.

- c. Applications from employees who are on active duty with the uniformed services are to be accepted at any time for subsequent consideration when an appropriate vacancy is announced.
- d. Nonbargaining employees on active military duty may also request reassignments to lateral or lower-level positions in accordance with the nonbargaining selection policy.
- e. Selected individuals are to be placed in the new position with the appropriate pay level by initiating a personnel action while in the leave-without-pay (LWOP) status.
- f. ~~An~~Human Resources must establish and retain an audit trail of the selection activity ~~must be established and retained by Human Resources.~~
- g. Upon ~~the employee's~~ return from active military service, the responsibility for submitting bids or applications for nonbargaining positions reverts to the employee.

718 **Vacancy File**

A vacancy file is established for all promotions made under the competitive procedures. (See [728.26728.27](#) and [728.36728.37](#) for bargaining procedures and [743.42743.42](#) for nonbargaining procedures.)

72 Bargaining Positions

721 **Filling Positions**

~~The filling of~~Filling bargaining positions through assignment, reassignment, or promotion is subject to the provisions of the appropriate collective bargaining agreements. Except for provisions in the agreements covering excess and ill or injured employees, vacancies must be filled by promotion or reassignment within the appropriate craft and installation, if qualified bidders or applicants are available.

722 **Conversion to Full-Time Status**

A *full-time residual position* is filled by assigning an unassigned full-time employee or a full-time flexible employee. The conversion to full-time of a qualified *part-time* flexible employee with the same designation or occupation code as the vacancy should occur only after unassigned full-time employees have been assigned. Part-time flexible employees must be changed to full-time regular positions, if appropriate, within the installation in the order specified by the applicable collective bargaining agreement.

723 **Area of Consideration**

The area of consideration is described in the appropriate collective bargaining agreement. If necessary, the area may be expanded to eligible employees in other crafts at the same installation, and then to eligible employees at other installations.

724 **Position Requirements**

Requirements for individual duty assignments are ~~indicated~~included in qualification standards, vacancy announcements, or job postings. These requirements pertain to assignment, reassignment, or promotion. The following also apply:

- a. A vacancy announcement or job posting may ~~indicate~~include requirements in addition to those in the applicable qualification standard. These additional requirements include special requirements or ~~typing~~computer skills and/or driving requirements that may be added. (See 725.2, Appropriate Special Requirements; “Appropriate Special Requirements,” and 763.22, Local Options for Basic Computer Skills and Driving Requirements); “Local Options for Basic Computer Skills and Driving Requirements.”)
- b. Qualification standards are available for most bargaining positions ~~on Bqnet, Bargaining Qualifications on~~in the NetHuman Resources system of record. When a qualification standard exists for a specific bargaining position, its provisions must be followed. (See 727.2, No Qualification Standards; 727.3, “No Qualification Standards,” when a qualification standard is not available for a position.)

725 **Special Requirements**

725.1 **Identification, Justification, and Documentation**

Special requirements must be related to the job, and must be justified to show that the particular requirement will enable applicants to perform critical job duties that they would otherwise be unable to do satisfactorily. Sufficient documentation must be available to show that special requirements are clearly job-related, and the documentation must be retained in the vacancy file.

725.2 **Appropriate Special Requirements**

Special requirements for bargaining positions ~~should~~must be written as knowledge, skill, or ability statements.

Examples of appropriate special requirements, if justified for a particular position, include:

- a. Knowledge of a language other than English.
- b. Knowledge of a particular computer-programming language that cannot readily be acquired after selection.

725.3 **Inappropriate Special Requirements**

Educational requirements, such as a bachelor's degree, or length of experience, such as 6 ~~months~~months of experience, are *not* appropriate as special requirements and must not be added locally. If education or experience requirements are listed on a qualification standard, they ~~may~~must *not* be modified. No ~~test~~examinations may be added, *except* as allowed for ~~typing~~basic computer-skills requirements.

Other examples of inappropriate special requirements include:

- a. A requirement that could readily be met by a brief initial period of orientation and familiarization in the assignment.
- b. A requirement that unduly restricts the number of eligible candidates or favors a particular candidate.
- c. A requirement not immediately essential to the position, such as one based on a possible future assignment, except in the case of a trainee

position where ability and potential to advance to higher levels in the occupation are required.

726 Posting Requirements

726.1 General

All vacant craft duty assignments that are not to be reverted must first be posted within the craft for filling in accordance with the applicable collective bargaining agreement. Bidders or applicants must meet all requirements before being placed into the position. When posting does not result in successful bidders or applicants, the following may be used to fill the position:

- a. Reassignment.
- b. Change to lower level.
- c. Promotion.
- d. Reinstatement. (See 233.33, "Reinstatement and Reemployment.")
- e. Transfer from another federal agency. (See 233.34, "Transfer From Another Federal Entity.")
- f. Other external appointment.

726.12 Entry Positions in PS-5 and Below

Entry-level promotional opportunities to residual vacancies remaining after exhausting the bidding or application procedures need not be posted.

However, procedures must be developed locally to inform lower-level employees of promotional opportunities and to arrange for appropriate in-service examinations for employees who have not already qualified.

Management must encourage employees to apply, and Managers must also extend every opportunity for promotion to employees who are eligible, qualified, and available before recruiting from external sources.

Employees on active military duty may leave bids or applications for future bargaining vacancies with Human Resources, or an appropriate manager, for actualization when posting occurs.

726.23 Senior Qualified Positions

Senior qualified positions must be posted in accordance with the appropriate collective bargaining agreement.

726.34 Best Qualified Positions

Best qualified positions must be posted in accordance with the appropriate collective bargaining agreement. The following posting requirements are applicable must be included in job postings for best qualified positions only:

- a. Position by title, number, level, and duties.
- b. Location, tour of duty, and scheduled workweek.
- c. Existing job requirements. If a qualification standard is available on the Human Resources system of record, it must be used.
- d. Directions/Instructions regarding where to send applications, the date by which applications must be submitted, and where additional information can be obtained.
- e. Specification that selection will be made from among the best qualified

applicants who are eligible and available.

- f. Craft designation, in accordance with the applicable collective bargaining agreement.
- g. Statement on equal employment opportunity.
- h. Statement on prohibition of political recommendations.

727 **Bargaining Selection Procedures**

727.1 **General**

The goal of bargaining selection procedures, whether for entry or in-service positions, is to ensure that qualified people are selected to fill the positions. Eligibles selected, promoted, or reassigned at any level must meet all the requirements of the position as stated on the qualification standard, and the vacancy announcement or job posting.

Employees fully meet the physical requirements of a position if they are physically able to perform the essential functions of the position, with or without reasonable accommodation where appropriate, and without posing a direct threat of harm to themselves or others. (See Handbook EL-307, *Reasonable Accommodation, An Interactive Process*.)

721.42 **Qualification Standards**

Bargaining qualification standards, available ~~on Bqnet, Qualification Standards, Bargaining Positions on the Intranet~~ in the Human Resources system of record, ~~indicate include~~ the requirements that all bidders or applicants must meet to be eligible for placement in the position. The qualification standards are applicable when filling both entry and inservice positions.

Additional requirements for positions may be established only as specified in 725, "Special Requirements," and 76, "Bargaining Job-Position Qualification Standards." These additional requirements must be specified on the job posting or vacancy announcement. ~~Section-Subchapter 76~~ contains further instructions on ~~the use of using~~ qualification standards.

727.23 **No Qualification Standards**

Some bargaining positions do not have qualification standards. Requirements for these positions must be developed locally and be included in the vacancy announcement or job posting. Appropriate documentation used to develop requirements must be retained in the vacancy file.

727.34 **When to Evaluate Qualifications**

Human Resources personnel are obligated to ensure that successful bidders have demonstrated that they meet all the position requirements, including the following:

- a. *Bidding for a cChange in sSchedule.* When a bid is to a position of the same title and level in order to obtain a change in the work schedule, an evaluation of qualifications is limited to typing-computer skills or driving requirements and special requirements, if any, that may be different from those in the current duty assignment.
- b. *Bidding to rReturn to a pPosition pPreviously hHeld.* When a bid is to return to a position that the bidder previously held, appropriate records must be reviewed to determine if the requirements for the position are the same as when the bidder originally obtained the position. The following

apply:

- (1) If any requirements have changed, the bidder must meet all new requirements, regardless of how long it has been since the bidder left the position.
- (2) An eligible bidder may be disqualified on a current bid if the bidder was previously taken out of the same or similar position for not meeting a job requirement.
- (3) Similarly, a record of pending removal in a previous position may also be justification for disqualification. In both cases, the amount of time passed between bidding out and bidding back, and the bidder's record in the interim must be considered.

726.45 **Timing and Sequence of Evaluation**

~~Specifications regarding t~~Time frames and sequences appropriate to the evaluation process, ~~indicated~~included elsewhere in this chapter and in the collective bargaining agreements, state that while applicants and/or bidders must *meet the requirements* of the position, not all the requirements must necessarily be demonstrated at the same time.

For example, after a senior bidder has been found to meet all other requirements of a position with training requirements, the bidder is placed into training and then must demonstrate satisfactory completion of the training.

Also, an applicant or bidder may be awarded a position pending review of ~~the applicant's or bidder's~~ driving history records and ~~the actual~~ driver's license to ensure its validity. (Ssee [516](#), "Driving History," and [517.5](#), "Driver's License Review.")

Evaluators, review committees, and selecting officials must take such sequences into account when evaluating qualifications or requesting that applicants and bidders demonstrate their qualifications.

727.56 **Evaluating Qualifications**

When qualifications are evaluated, applicants and bidders ~~have the obligation~~are obligated to demonstrate that their qualifications meet the requirements.

If there is insufficient information to establish a senior bidder's qualifications, information from the bidder is requested after ~~the posting closes~~of the posting.

(Ssee ~~728.23~~[728.22](#), "Bidding and Qualifications.")

If an applicant or bidder does not meet all the ~~position's~~requirements of the position, including an examination, the person is not qualified and, therefore, not eligible for further consideration. (See [714.1b](#), [714.1b](#) for an explanation of meeting the requirements, and [727.4](#), [727.5](#) for information ~~that covers~~on when requirements must be met.)

727.67 **Pertinent Information**

In evaluating qualifications, evaluators must consider available pertinent information that ~~tends to show~~shows whether the employee ~~does or does not possess~~meets the qualifications. Pertinent information may include, but is not limited to, ~~any of~~ the following:

- a. Interviews.
- b. Supervisory appraisals.

- c. The written application specifying *verified* experience, education, and training.
- d. Certificates of course completion or transcripts, accompanied by a school catalog specifying course content, when requested.
- e. Examination results.
- f. Personnel records.

Note: Interviews for best qualified positions must be used as indicated/specified in 728-34728.35, "Conducting Interviews." For senior qualified positions, interviews must be used as indicated/specified in 728-23d-728.24d.

728 Selection Procedures

728.1 Placement Principles

The following ~~sections discuss selection of~~ includes standards for selecting employees for placement under the senior qualified and best qualified procedures:

- a. ~~Senior qQualified pPositions.~~ Employee placement into positions filled through senior qualified procedures must be based on the following:
 - (1) The employee's eligibility to bid.
 - (2) The employee's seniority.
 - (3) The senior bidder's qualifications in relationship/related to the requirements.
 - (4) The employee's successful completion of required training, if any.
- b. ~~Best qQualified pPositions.~~ Employee placement into positions filled through best qualified procedures must be based on:
 - (1) The employee's eligibility to apply.
 - (2) The best qualifications among employees who have met the requirements.
 - (3) The employee's successful completion of required training, if any.

728.2 Senior Qualified Positions

728.21 General

Senior qualified bidders, ~~having met/who meet~~ the position requirements ~~given~~ one of the qualification standards ~~stated on the~~ or job posting, are placed into the position, or into training for the position, in accordance with the appropriate collective bargaining agreement. Human Resources personnel are responsible for ensuring that qualifications are evaluated for bids to all senior qualified positions (see 727-4727.5, "Timing and Sequence of Evaluation.").

728.221 Documentation of Qualifications

In many cases, there is no need to document the evaluation of the senior bidder's qualifications. When such documentation is required, the evaluator must complete PS Form 1796-A, *Qualifications Rating Sheet for Senior Qualified Positions*.

728.232 Bidding and Qualifications

Bidders for senior qualified positions submit bids in accordance with the provisions of the appropriate collective bargaining agreement (~~—~~i.e., by telephone, computer, or in writing) using PS Form 1717, *Bid for Preferred Assignment*. Following the close of the posting, the senior bidder's qualifications should be evaluated through a review of the employee's OPF and any other pertinent information available. (Ssee 727.3727.4, "When to Evaluate Qualifications," and 727.4727.5, "Timing and Sequence of Evaluation.")

If there is *sufficient* information to show that the senior bidder meets the job requirements, the senior bidder is presumed to be qualified. Otherwise, the 5 senior bidders must be requested to address the position requirements, ~~of the position~~ in writing, using the following these procedures:

- a. ~~TEach of the 5~~ most senior bidders ~~is~~ are each asked to furnish in writing his or her qualifications for the position ~~in writing~~; however, ~~if any of the 5 are~~ currently qualified through previous qualification, ~~they~~ are *not* subject to this requirement. (Ssee 727.43b, When to Evaluate Qualifications, "Bidding to rReturn to a pPosition pPreviously hHeld.")
- b. A copy of the qualification standard, ~~and the B-element questions, if applicable (see (763.1b, Contents, Appendix I)~~ must be provided to the bidders. If the position does not have a qualification standard, a copy of the posting indicating showing the requirements must be provided to the bidders.
- c. Bidders are allowed at least 3 days to respond. They must record their qualifications on PS Form 991, *Application for Promotion or Assignment*, and return it by the deadline specified.
- d. If a test-an examination is required that is normally usually given after the posting closes, the 5 senior bidders — at a minimum — are scheduled for the test examination, unless currently qualified.
- e. If there are fewer less than 5 bidders for a position, these procedures apply to all who bid.

728.2324 **Evaluating Qualifications**

If a test-an examination is required, any existing test examination scores are obtained for the bidders.

A qualification evaluator from Hhuman Rresources considers the senior bidder's qualifications in-comparison compared to the position requirements, as follows:

- a. The evaluator may review the employee's OPFeOPF and other official records that contain pertinent information, and, if necessary, contact the bidder and/or an appropriate supervisor for clarification.
- b. If written statements were obtained, the evaluator must complete PS Form 1796-A, *Qualifications Rating Sheet for Senior Qualified Positions*, for the senior bidder.
- c. Only if the senior bidder is found to be *not qualified* will the next senior bidder be evaluated, and PS Form 1796-A completed for that bidder.
- d. The evaluator may conduct interviews to supplement the written record to establish whether a bidder meets specific requirements. The use of interviewsInterviews for a senior qualified position must not be used to rank or selectively choose among bidders.

728.24 728.25 **Using PS Form 1796-A**

PS Form 1796-A is used to document that the senior bidder meets all the ~~position's~~ requirements ~~of the position.~~ This form ~~is~~must ~~not be~~ used if the senior bidder is determined to be qualified from the ~~OPFeOPF~~ review. However, if the 5 senior bidders have been requested to address their qualifications on PS Form 991, the evaluator must complete PS Form 1796-A to document the evaluation process for the senior bidder as follows:

- a. In Column A, "Identification of Requirements," the evaluator lists the ~~test~~examination requirements ~~including the,~~ knowledge, skills, and abilities, and any other requirements for the position.
- b. In Column B, "Demonstration," the evaluator must decide whether the senior bidder has demonstrated each requirement, based on the information available. If the bidder failed a required examination, the bidder is not qualified and no additional information is needed on PS Form 1796-A. Similarly, if the position requires driving, and the bidder failed a driver's license checklist review (see 517.5, "Driver's License Review,"), the bidder is not qualified, and no additional information is needed on PS Form 1796-A.
- c. In Column C, "Measurements Used," the evaluator ~~must~~ indicate~~explain~~ how the determination for each requirement was made. The statements may be brief, but ~~should~~must provide enough information to enable the evaluator to recall the facts that led to the decision. This column is not completed for examination requirements.
- d. The evaluator completes Section 3, "Finding," checking ~~qualified~~ "Qualified" if the bidder has demonstrated every requirement. If the evaluator checked ~~no~~ "No" in Column B for ~~4~~one or more requirements, the bidder is not qualified. (See ~~727.4, "Timing and Sequence of Evaluation,~~ 727.5, "Timing and Sequence of Evaluation," which ~~explains~~includes information on timing and sequences for bidders to meet some requirements.)

~~728.25~~ 728.26 **Selecting the Senior Bidder**

When the evaluation is completed, the senior bidder is selected for the position if qualified. An evaluation of the next senior bidder's qualifications is not necessary when the senior bidder is selected.

~~728.26~~ 728.27 **Vacancy File**

Appropriate documentation, including PS Forms 1796-A (if completed), PS Forms 1717, Bid for Preferred Assignment, the posting, and written statements (if obtained) must be maintained with employee bidding records.

728.3 **Best Qualified Positions**

728.31 **General**

Qualifications help selecting officials determine the relative standing for ~~selection of~~selecting career employees who are eligible to apply for such positions based on applicable collective bargaining agreements. Of those applicants who meet all ~~of the~~ requirements, the applicant who is found to be the best qualified ~~on the basis of~~based on total qualifications will be selected. This determination is made ~~on the basis of a comparison of~~based on comparing total qualifications among applicants for the position. (See ~~728.36~~728.37, "Selection of Best Qualified Applicant.")

~~728.31~~728.32 **Selecting Official**

For filling best qualified positions, the selecting official is normally usually the supervisor or manager with the vacancy. Bargaining employees serving as acting supervisors may not serve as selecting officials. The selecting official has numerous options ~~with regard to~~ regarding review committees and interviews, ~~and these.~~ These options are described in the sections that follow. If recommendations are made to the selecting official from a review committee, the selecting official may have access to all information used by the review committee, including completed PS Forms 1796-B, *Qualifications Rating Sheet for Best Qualified Positions*.

728.3233 **Documentation of Qualifications**

728.331 **General**

The initial determination of qualifications is documented on PS Form 1796-B, *Qualifications Rating Sheet for Best Qualified Positions*. The review committee, or in the absence of a review committee, the selecting official, completes this form for every applicant.

728.324332 **Applications and Qualifications**

Applicants for best qualified positions are required to describe their qualifications in writing. (See 765.2, "Best Qualified Positions.") PS Form 991, *Application for Promotion or Assignment*, must be used for this purpose. Applicants must address each ~~of the requirements~~ requirement listed on the qualification standard or posting, including desirable qualifications, if any. Applications must be submitted by the deadline specified.

~~763.26~~ 728.333 **Desirable Qualifications**

~~Some qualification standards contain factors identified as desirable qualifications. These factors are used to select applicants.~~ Desirable qualifications may be locally added to the posting for best qualified positions. If used, they must be related to the position and documented on the job posting. However, ~~they~~ they may not be used as a basis for disqualification.

728.322334 **Evaluating Qualifications**

The qualifications of all applicants are compared to the position requirements stated on the vacancy announcement or job posting. AsAt a minimum, applicants' written statements are reviewed by selection officials and review committee members.

The applicants' ~~OPFs~~ OPFs and other official records may be reviewed; however, it is recommended that the selecting official review the ~~OPF~~ OPF of the person to be selected before finalizing the decision. The selecting official's decision whether to use a review committee normally usually is based on the number of applicants and the time available to the selecting official to review the applications.

728.343 **Review Committees**

728.341 **General**

The function of the review committee is to evaluate the applicants' qualifications and eligibility for the position, to conduct interviews if appropriate (see 728.34, Conducting Interviews), 728.35, Conducting Interviews), and to make recommendations to the selecting official on the best qualified applicants. The selecting official may also choose to have the review committee ~~make the determination of~~ determine the best qualified applicant.

728.331342 **Review Committee Structure**

All review committee members must be nonbargaining employees. Normally, Usually a committee will consist of 2 nonbargaining employees from the functional area of the vacancy, and 1 from outside the functional area.

A selecting official who asks a review committee to *determine* the best qualified applicant may also be a member of the committee. However, a selecting official who asks a review committee to *recommend* those who best meet the requirements of the position may must not be a member of the committee.

728.332343 **Review Committee Procedures**

Review committee procedures follow the principles of independent work and consensus decision-making. Specific steps are:

- a. Each committee member should must independently determine if the applicants have demonstrated each requirement.
- b. Members should must discuss their decisions collectively and arrive at a consensus for each requirement for each applicant.
- c. The committee chairperson must complete PS Form 1796-B through Column B based on this consensus for each applicant. Applicants found not qualified at this stage are removed from further consideration for this vacancy. For those applicants who are not qualified, the chairperson completes Column D and Section 5, and obtains signatures for Section 6 of PS Form 1796-B.
- d. For applicants who are qualified, individual review committee members should must then determine the level of demonstration of each requirement by each applicant.
- e. Members should then discuss their decisions collectively and arrive at a consensus on the level of demonstration of each requirement by each applicant.
- f. The chairperson completes a PS Form 1796-B for each applicant, and all members sign the form.
- g. If the review committee conducts applicant interviews, it selects must select applicants based on the highest point totals on PS Form 1796-B. There is no set minimum or maximum number of applicants to interview. Applicants who are tied in point totals must be treated equally. Either all applicants are interviewed, or no applicants are interviewed.

Note: Applicants found not qualified must not be interviewed.

- h. If the review committee makes recommendations to the selecting official, but does not interview, approximately applicants, about 3- to 5 applicants (there is no set minimum or maximum number), are recommended based on the highest point totals on PS Form 1796-B.
The following also apply:
 - (1) Applicants who are tied in point totals must be treated the same. Either they are all recommended, or none of them are recommended.
 - (2) The review committee must prepare a signed memorandum to the selecting official indicating listing, in alphabetical order, the names of the recommended applicants.
- i. If the review committee interviews applicants and makes

recommendations to the selecting official, ~~approximately about~~ 3- to 5 applicants (there is no set minimum or maximum number) are recommended. The following also apply:

(1) No formal method exists for incorporating the results of the interview.

(2) The review committee must recommend only those applicants who best meet the position requirements based on the point totals from PS Form 1796-B, the interview, and any other pertinent information reviewed during the evaluation. ~~The review committee must prepare a signed memorandum to the selecting official indicating, in alphabetical order, the names of the recommended applicants.~~

(3) The review committee must prepare a signed memorandum to the selecting official indicating listing, in alphabetical order, the names of the recommended applicants.

j. If the selecting official wishes asks the review committee to determine who is the best qualified applicant, then the committee makes no recommendations ~~are made~~ to the selecting official. In this case, the review committee must:

(1) ~~I-interview~~ the potential applicants. ~~The review committee determines who~~

(2) Determine the best qualified applicant ~~is~~ based on the point totals from PS Form 1796-B, the interview, and any other pertinent information reviewed during the evaluation, ~~and consideration of.~~

(3) Consider any desirable qualifications. ~~The review committee must prepare~~

(4) Prepare a signed memorandum to the manager of Human Resources indicating listing the names of the best qualified applicant and 2 alternates in rank order.

728.3435 **Conducting Interviews**

Interviews provide additional information for a-comparing ~~son of the~~ applicants' qualifications. Interviews are mandatory and may be conducted by the selecting official, the review committee, or both. Interviews may must be conducted only after completing ~~on of~~ PS Forms 1796-B. No documentation of the interviews is required.

Review committee members must reach consensus on combining the interview results with the point totals from PS Forms 1796-B (and other pertinent information) to in-reaching their finalize their recommendations or ~~final~~ determination of the best qualified applicant.

728.3536 **Using PS Form 1796-B**

PS Form 1796-B documents whether an applicant has demonstrated all ~~the~~ position requirements, and, if so, the level of their the applicant's qualifications. ~~Form 1796-B does~~ Interviews are not document ~~interviews documented on~~ PS Form 1796-B. The following list gives ~~specificare~~ instructions for the correctly using of PS Form 1796-B:

a. In Column A, "Identification of Requirements," the review committee or selecting official lists all the position requirements. These are divided into ~~Examination Requirements; Physical and Driving requirements; and Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities~~ (that may be written in B-element

~~format, per 763.1b, Appendix I, Bqnet). Desirable qualifications are not listed as requirements (see 714.1f):~~

~~(1) Examination requirements;~~

~~(2) Physical and dDriving rRequirements; and~~

~~(3) Knowledge, sSkills, and aAbilities (that may be written in B-element format, per 763.1b, Appendix I, Bqnetqualification standardsqualification standards). Desirable qualifications are not listed as requirements (see 714.1f).~~

- b. In Column B, "Demonstration," based on the information available, the review committee determines whether the applicant has demonstrated each requirement, ~~based on the information available.~~ If the applicant does not meet all ~~the~~ requirements — (i.e., if the evaluator checked ~~no~~ "No" under "Demonstrated" for any requirement.), the applicant is not qualified and Column C is not completed.

Note: If the applicant failed a required examination, the applicant is not qualified, and no additional information is needed on PS Form 1796-B.

- c. In Column C, "Points," information is entered only for those applicants who meet all the position requirements as established by in Column B. The review committee or selecting official assigns points to indicate the level of qualifications demonstrated by the applicant. No points are assigned for driving or physical requirements.
- d. In Column D, "Measurements Used," the review committee or selecting official must indicate explain briefly how the decision was made. These statements need not include all facts considered.
- e. In Section 4, "Score Calculation," the total points in Column C are averaged and multiplied by 20. The maximum points that ~~can~~ may be earned from the evaluation are 100. The examination score, if any, is then added to this score to obtain the total points.
- f. In Section 5, "Finding," the results of the evaluation of the applicant's qualifications are summarized.

728.3637 **Selecting on of Best Qualified Applicant**

Selection for the position will be based on total qualifications, considering the point totals on PS Forms 1796-B, the results of the interviews, desirable qualifications (if any), and other pertinent information reviewed during the evaluation.

728.3738 **Selection Oversight**

It is imperative that selecting officials, review committee members for best qualified positions, and evaluators for senior qualified positions, know the scope of their responsibilities and ~~the correct application of~~ how to correctly apply the principles of selection. ~~In this regard, it~~ is helpful, but not mandatory, to include a nonbargaining Hhuman Resources employee on each review committee for a best qualified position.

728.3839 **Vacancy File**

The vacancy file must contain full documentation supporting the selection decision. The file and documentation must be maintained and retained for 5 years. This documentation includes a:

a. A copy of the announcement, ~~the~~;

b. The qualification standard, ~~applications~~;

c. Applications;

d. PS Forms 1796-B, a;

e. A list of review committee members; and the

f. The name of the selecting official.

Notes ~~made by that~~ individual review committee members made are the members' ~~own~~ property, not ~~records of the~~ Postal Service records, and ~~they, therefore,~~ are not included in the vacancy file.

73 Reserved

This section reserved for future use.

74 Nonbargaining Positions

* * * * *

75 Supervisor Selection Process

* * * * *

76 Bargaining ~~Position-~~Job-Qualification Standards

761 Purpose

The purpose of job-qualification standards is to establish selection criteria so that Postal Service positions are staffed with fully qualified persons whose job performance will provide effective customer service and efficient Postal Service operations. Qualification standards ~~state~~include the minimum knowledge, skills, abilities, and other requirements that are essential for successful job performance.

Some qualification standards may also ~~indicate~~include desirable qualification factors that may be used in selecting applicants for best qualified positions.

762 Scope

~~Bqnet contains~~Bargaining job descriptions contain qualification standards for use in both entrance and in-service placements for bargaining ~~positions~~jobs. Qualification standards may not currently be available for all ~~positions~~jobs covered by collective bargaining agreements. (See 727, "Bargaining Selection Procedures," when selections are being made for such positions.)

763 Bqnet Human Resources System of Record and Contents

763.1 General

Current qualification standards are maintained in ~~an electronic database located on~~ the Human Resources system of record, ~~Selection, Evaluation, and Recognition, Postal Service Intranet (Bqnet — Bargaining Qualifications on the Net). Selection, Evaluation, and Recognition will issue new and revised standards by updating Bqnet.~~ These include:

- a. Occupation code. Each bargaining unit job is uniquely identified by an occupation code. The occupation code identifies the job and connects it to a specific job title and pay grade.
- b. Knowledge Skills and Abilities (KSAs). The qualification standards for each job are part of the job description and list the requirements for the job.

763.1 Contents

The following qualification standards, indexes, and appendixes are available in electronic form ~~only~~ at Bqnet — Bargaining Qualifications on the Net.

- a. ~~Qualification Standards.~~ The qualification standards are identified by a qualification standard number. Each number is unique to the standard. In most cases, the first 4 digits of the occupation code form the qualification standard number, although an additional letter may be added to maintain unique numbers.
- b. ~~Appendix I.~~ Appendix I contains a list of elements reflecting the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) that are requirements common to many positions in the Postal Service. These are called B-elements that are denoted by a B before the requirement number. This notation refers to a B-element in this appendix. Appendix I also lists questions by B-elements to guide selecting officials in using specific B-elements. (See Bqnet, Appendix I, for further information on the use of these questions.)

- ~~c.—Appendix II. Appendix II contains a list of elements reflecting the knowledge, skills, and abilities that are requirements common to positions covered by the Maintenance Selection System.~~
- ~~d.—Occupation Code Index. This index of qualification standards is arranged numerically by occupation code.~~
- ~~e.—Alphabetical Index. This index of qualification standards is arranged alphabetically by position title.~~
- ~~f.—Qualification Standard Number Index. This index of qualification standards is arranged in order by qualification standard number.~~

763.2 Contents of Qualification Standards

763.21 Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities Requirements

This section of a qualification standard contains the knowledge, skills, and abilityabilities (KSA) requirements. ~~In some standards, these requirements may be identified as B elements that refer to the elements in Appendix I, Bqnet. Other requirements may simply be numbered or lettered consecutively.~~

763.22 Local Options for Basic Computer Skills and Driving Requirements

763.221 General

Some ~~position~~job qualification standards do not specify basic computer skills or driving requirements. However, the ability to use a computer, drive, or both, may be essential to ~~the efficient performance of some specific~~efficiently performing some duty assignments. When filling any vacant position with no officially published basic computer skills or driving requirements listed on the qualification standards, local management may add:

- a. ~~The Exam 718, "Basic Computer Skills Test 718,"~~ and/or
- b. A driving requirement to operate a motor vehicle or powered industrial equipment.

Basic computer skills or driving requirements must be reasonably related to ~~the efficient performance of~~efficiently performing the duties of the job, and local management may only add these requirements when the applicant is expected to use computer skills or drive ~~on a regular basis~~regularly in the position.

Local management may not modify or delete existing basic computer skills or driving requirements in official qualification standards.

763.222 Basic Computer Skills

If ~~you add~~the selecting official adds a basic computer skills requirement, ~~include to the qualification standards of the job, the selecting official must include~~ the following statement on the job posting or vacancy announcement:

~~"Applicants must demonstrate basic computer skills as demonstrated by successful completion of Postal Service Test~~Exam 718."

763.223 Driving Requirements

If ~~you add~~a selecting official adds driving as a requirement, ~~for the position, the selecting official must~~ include one of the following statements on the job posting or vacancy announcement, as appropriate to the position:

- a. ~~"Applicants must have or be able to obtain authorization to operate a motor vehicle."~~
- b. ~~"Applicants must have or be able to obtain authorization to operate powered industrial equipment."~~

763.23 Physical Requirements

Physical requirements are included in some qualification standards. These requirements are intended primarily for applicants who are entering the Postal Service. Medical assessments for in-service applicants or bidders are administered only when the physical requirements for the new positions are more demanding than those required in the employee's current position.

All employees must be physically able to perform the essential functions of the positions for which they are applying, with or without reasonable accommodation where appropriate, and without posing a direct threat of harm to themselves or others.

763.24 **Examination Requirements**

763.241 **General**

Examination requirements may include a performance test, a rated application, or a written examination. The "Examination Requirements" section of the qualification standard will indicatespecify if an examination is required.

See 233.12, which describes when substitutions for examination requirements are permitted.

~~763.241~~ 763.242 **Rated Applications**

A rated application is a method of evaluating and rating applicants' experience and training to determine their-applicants' qualifications for specific positions. The "Examination Requirements" section of some qualification standards will indicate-specify that the position is *filled by rated application*.

In such cases, the rated application is to be used only for entrance and in-service application procedures. Rated applications are *not* used for in-craft applications. The following situations apply to rated applications:

- a. *Bid Procedures.* When a position is being filled through bid procedures and the qualification standard for this position specifies a rated application, the rated application is not used in this instance. However, any examination specified in the qualification standard is required. Human Resources offices must ensure that bidders for these positions meet all the requirements indicated-specified in the qualification standard.
- b. *Reviewing Qualifications.* When a rated application is used for in-service application procedures, officials are still required to review the applicant's qualifications, and to complete a PS Form 1796-A after receiving the following:
 - (1) -The individual's rated -application score; and
 - (2) -Any other applicable test scores.

~~763.242~~763.243 **Test Examination Development and Using e-of Results**

Except for scheme examinations, testexaminations are developed by or at the direction of Selection, Evaluation, and Recognition-Organizational Effectiveness. In cases where a written testexamination is required, the results of that testexamination must be used according to the terms of the applicable collective bargaining agreement. Applicants or bidders who have previously qualified on a written testexamination are not retestedrequired to retake the examination.

763.243 Substitution of Typing Examinations

Substitutions for typing examinations include the following:

An applicant who bids a position that requires Test 713 need not take that test, if the applicant has qualified within the 2 years prior to application on Test 712, or the applicant currently holds a position requiring regular use of the typing skill level for Test 712.

No typing test is allowed as a substitution for Test 714.

763.25 Experience Requirements

Many qualification standards contain experience requirements. These are minimum requirements that all applicants must meet. ~~The substitution of~~ Substituting education or training for experience is appropriate only as indicated in the qualification standard.

~~763.26~~ **Desirable Qualifications**

~~Some qualification standards contain factors identified as desirable qualifications. These factors are used to select applicants for best qualified positions. They may not be used as a basis for disqualification.~~

764 Using Qualification Standards to Fill Vacancies

Vacancies to be filled by bid or application are posted in accordance with the applicable collective bargaining agreement and [72](#), "Bargaining Positions." The qualification standard appropriate for the particular position must be included in the announcement. No additions, deletions, or modifications are permitted, except as provided by [725](#), "Special Requirements," and [727.3](#), "No Qualification Standards."

765 Selection Decisions

765.1 Senior Qualified Positions

For bargaining positions filled ~~on the basis of~~ based on *senior qualified*, the senior bidder's qualifications are compared to the published qualification standard. The senior bidder is selected if qualified. (See [72](#), "Bargaining Positions.")

765.2 Best Qualified Positions

For bargaining positions filled ~~on the basis of~~ based on *best qualified*, all applicants are required to describe their qualifications based on relevant education, training, or experience. This description must address the requirements ~~given~~ on the qualification standard. ~~Where applicable, applicants should consult the B-element questions given in Appendix I. Where~~ If there is no appreciable difference in qualifications, seniority is considered, except if it will be the determining factor as required by a collective bargaining agreement.

766 Waiver of Qualification Requirements

766.1 Actions ~~Prior to~~ Before Requests for Waivers

Applicants for positions for which standards have been published must fully meet the specified requirements. If a ~~selecting~~ appointing official determines that there is no qualified employee available for consideration in the ~~normal~~ usual area of consideration, the following alternative courses of action must be taken ~~prior to~~ before requesting a waiver of the specified standard for the position:

- a. Expand the area of consideration for internal applicants.
- b. Conduct an extensive external recruitment effort aimed at the applicant pool for the position.

766.2 **Approving Authority and Procedures**

When there is valid reason to request a variation from a published standard, the following procedures ~~is used~~ are followed:

- a. The ~~appointing-selecting~~ official must request, in writing, a variation of 1 or more items of a qualification standard through ~~normal-usual~~ channels of communications to the ~~manager-director~~ of ~~Selection, Evaluation, and Recognition~~ Organizational Effectiveness.
- b. Requests for variation must include appropriate evidence to support the request. Such requests must be responsive to the following questions ~~as well as, and include~~ any other pertinent information:
 - (1) Have adequate recruiting efforts been made to secure a fully qualified applicant (i.e., expansion of area of consideration, advertising, contacts with professional community groups, and use of employment services, etc.)?
 - (2) What is the impact of the variation on the equal employment opportunity policy of the Postal Service?
 - (3) Does the variation seek to lower an established educational requirement?
 - (4) Does the variation ~~seek to~~ establish a new education requirement where none has been required? (Mandatory education requirements should not be necessary for most bargaining positions.)
- c. Requests must be for qualification standards for the position only, never for an individual. If the waiver is approved, the selection process must begin again, ~~using and~~ the revised standards for that ~~particular~~ position ~~used~~. All newly eligible applicants must be given consideration for the job.
- d. The qualification requirement waiver applies only until the ~~job~~ position is filled. Subsequent vacancies for the same position must be posted using the published qualification standard.
- e. ~~Normally, Usually~~ an employee may be selected for a position that has the requirements waived only once in any 12-month period.

766.3 **Documentation**

The written request for variation from a qualification standard must be addressed as specified in 766.2a, and ~~must~~ include the ~~specific~~ information ~~shown~~ specified in 766.2b. The request must provide approving officials with the information necessary to reach a decision and provide employees with a record of an approved variation. The request will also serve as a record of the variation for inclusion in the vacancy file.

77 Employment Restoration After Military Service

* * * * *

7 Assignment, Reassignment, and Promotion

71 Introduction

711 Organization

Most Postal Service positions are filled by qualified career employees (excluding new hires) through assignment, reassignment, and/or promotion. This chapter focuses on the policies and procedures governing in-service placement and qualification standards, as follows:

- a. 72 — Bargaining Positions.
- b. 73 — Reserved.
- c. 74 — Nonbargaining Positions (including Executive and Administrative Schedule [EAS], Management Pay Band, Technical Pay Band, Inspection Service Law Enforcement [ISLE] and Attorney Compensation System [ACS] positions).
- d. 75 — Supervisor Selection Process.
- e. 76 — Bargaining Job-Qualification Standards.
- f. 77 — Employment Restoration After Military Service.

712 Equal Employment Opportunity Policy

The following is Postal Service policy:

- a. Selections for positions to be filled by assignment, reassignment, or promotion will:
 - (1) Comply with the provisions of applicable collective bargaining agreements; and
 - (2) Be based on merit and the relevant experience, training, knowledge, skills, and abilities required for the positions being filled.
- b. All employees and applicants for employment will be afforded equal opportunities in employment without regard to race, color, sex (including pregnancy, sexual orientation, and gender identity, including transgender status), national origin, religion, age (40 or over), genetic information, disability, or retaliation for engaging in EEO-protected activity as provided by law. As part of its program of equal employment opportunity, the Postal Service prohibits discrimination or harassment based on any of these categories.
- c. The Postal Service also prohibits discrimination or harassment based on political affiliation; marital status; status as a parent; and past, present, or future military service.

713

Exclusions and Limitations

713.1

Exclusions

The provisions of this chapter specifically exclude:

- a. *Postal Career Executive Service (PCES) positions.*
- b. *Restricted positions.* The provisions on filling positions restricted to preference eligibles do not apply to in-service placements of career employees. (See 232.52, "Positions Restricted to Applicants Eligible for Veterans' Preference.")
- c. *Veterans' preference.* Does not apply to the internal placement of career employees. However, veterans' preference does apply to external applicants.

713.2

Limitations

Eligibility for consideration to some positions is limited to employees in specific levels, occupations, geographic areas, or organizations.

714

Selection: Definitions and Philosophy

714.1

Definitions

The following definitions clarify and standardize the terms used in the selection process:

- a. *Requirements.* The knowledge, skills, abilities, experiences, and physical and other conditions that pertain to a specific position or duty assignment. The following apply:
 - (1) Not all these requirements are appropriate for every position; only requirements that an individual needs to successfully perform the duties of a position upon entry apply.
 - (2) Employees fully meet the physical requirements of a position if they are physically able to perform the essential functions of the position, with or without reasonable accommodation where appropriate, and without posing a direct threat of harm to themselves or others. (See Handbook EL-307, *Reasonable Accommodation, An Interactive Process.*)
- b. *Qualifications.* The knowledge, skills, abilities, experience, and physical and other conditions that pertain to the applicant or bidder. The following apply:
 - (1) Applicants and bidders must meet the requirements, which means that they must possess the qualifications (e.g., the knowledge, skills, and abilities) that are required for the position.
 - (2) Bidders must demonstrate that they possess *each* of these qualifications at a level that is sufficient for satisfactory (as opposed to unsatisfactory) performance in the position.
 - (3) The timing for meeting the requirements for senior qualified positions is described in 727.5, "Timing and Sequence of

Evaluation."

- c. *Special conditions.* Conditions that apply only to nonbargaining positions. They describe the circumstances under which the work is performed. Being able to meet a special condition is essential to satisfactory performance at entry. Often conditions pertain to the willingness of the applicant to perform certain duties or tasks (e.g., willingness to travel frequently, or to work irregular hours).
- d. *Special requirements.* Requirements that apply only to bargaining positions. These are stated as knowledge, skills, or abilities required for a specific job assignment. Special requirements may be added locally and used in addition to the qualification standard for the position.
- e. *Qualification standard.* The official document that identifies the requirements of a bargaining position that are needed at entry. Qualification standards do not necessarily contain a complete list of requirements for continued satisfactory performance in a specific position.
- f. *Desirable qualification.* Qualification that applies only to best qualified positions. It is a knowledge, skill, or ability that is not a mandatory requirement of a position, but one that would be beneficial in performing the duties of a specific job. (This applies only to best qualified positions.)
- g. *Factors.* A cluster of related knowledge, skills, and abilities evaluated as a single requirement. Factors apply only in postmaster selection.
- h. *Job posting (bid posting).* A posting for filling a senior qualified bid bargaining position. A job-posting announcement contains one of the following:
 - (1) Job title and pay grade;
 - (2) Occupation code;
 - (3) Functional purpose;
 - (4) Job duties and responsibilities (description of the work); and
 - (5) Qualification standards.
- i. *Vacancy announcement.* An announcement for filling entrance positions, best qualified positions, or nonbargaining positions. A vacancy announcement contains one of the following:
 - (1) Job title and pay grade;
 - (2) Occupation code;
 - (3) Functional purpose;
 - (4) Job duties and responsibilities (description of the work); and
 - (5) Qualification standards.

Vacancy announcements do not necessarily contain a complete list of requirements for continued satisfactory performance in a position.

714.2 **Philosophy**

The philosophy underlying all selections is that a person placed into a position must be qualified — that is, must meet the requirements of the position. For senior qualified positions, selection is based on a determination of whether the senior bidder is qualified. For best qualified and nonbargaining positions, selection is based on a determination of who is best qualified based on total qualifications.

714.3 **Reasonable Accommodations in the Selection Process**

Reasonable accommodation for qualified applicants with disabilities can take many forms. (See Handbook EL-307, *Reasonable Accommodation, An Interactive Process.*) Accommodations that may be needed during the selection process include, but are not limited to providing the following:

- a. Written materials in accessible formats.
- b. Sign-language interpreters.
- c. Accessible locations for recruitment, interviews, performance examinations, and other components of the process.
- d. Equipment or devices that accommodate the applicant's disability or have been modified to accommodate the applicant's disability.
- e. Applications and employment questionnaires that have been adjusted or modified to accommodate the applicant's disability.

715 **Using Penalty Mail for Applications**

Only current bargaining Postal Service employees may forward job applications and job bids by penalty mail if the application or bid is in response to an official Postal Service job announcement.

716 **Positions Filled Temporarily**

716.1 **General**

When a career employee is temporarily absent, that employee's position may be filled by temporary assignment, reassignment, or promotion. The applicant must understand the terms of such an assignment — specifically, that when the absent employee returns, the applicant returns to the position the applicant occupied before the temporary assignment. (See 716.34, "Conditions of Temporary Promotion.")

Examples of temporary absences of an incumbent that justify filling a position temporarily include the following:

- a. Serving active military duty.
- b. Serving as a national officer of a Postal Service employee organization.
- c. Being temporarily assigned and/or promoted to another position.
- d. Being appointed as an officer-in-charge.

716.2 **Temporary Assignments**

716.21 **General**

Temporary assignment is the placement of an employee into an established position for a limited time period to perform duties and responsibilities other

than those contained in the employee's regular position description. A formal reassignment and/or promotion personnel action is not required.

716.22 Temporary Bargaining Assignments

Unless stated in the relevant collective bargaining agreement, employees in temporary bargaining assignments must meet the qualification standards for the positions to which they are assigned. When the relevant collective bargaining agreement contains specific provisions regarding higher-level bargaining assignments, these provisions must be followed.

716.23 Temporary Assignments to Nonbargaining Positions

The following general policies apply to temporary assignments to nonbargaining positions:

- a. Temporary assignments to nonbargaining positions are made only for the shortest practical time limits and may be used to meet emergencies caused by abnormal workload, a change in mission or organization, or unanticipated absences.
- b. When a nonbargaining employee is absent (except a postmaster), every effort must be made for other employees of the same or higher level to absorb the absent employee's duties.
- c. The selecting official or designee may temporarily assign any qualified employee to meet service needs.
- d. Typically, consideration is given to unassigned employees (i.e., employees whose positions have been abolished).
- e. A temporary assignment may be terminated at any time at management's discretion or at the employee's request.
- f. Temporary assignment of an employee to a position at the same or lower level should not exceed 90 calendar days, unless extended by the next higher level of management above the detailed position. (See 716.253 through 716.255 for time limits on temporary assignment to a higher-level position.)
- g. Temporary assignments must be documented using PS Form 1723, *Assignment Order*.

Temporary Assignment Duration Approvers

Temporary Assignment Duration	Approver	Reference
Up to and including 29 days	Selecting official or designee.	<u>716.23(c)</u>
30 days or more involving travel or higher-level pay	Next higher-level (NHL) manager over the manager of the position.*	<u>716.252</u> F-15 4-1.2.1
90 days or more involving higher-level pay	NHL of management above the detailed position.*	<u>716.253</u>
120 days or more involving higher-level pay	If the detailee is not a candidate for the position to which detailed, <i>NHL manager over the manager with the vacancy</i> can approve the extension.* If the detailee is a candidate for the position to which detailed, the assignment must be terminated before the 121 st day.	<u>716.254</u>
Exceeding 1 year	Prior written approval in advance from the vice president of Area Retail & Delivery Operations, vice president of Regional Processing, or vice president of Logistics (for field detail assignments), or the functional officer (for detail to a Headquarters and Headquarters Field position). The approving manager must notify the vice president, Controller.	<u>716.255</u> F-15 2-2.1.2

*Exception: If the detail assignment was originally approved by a PCES manager, further approval is not necessary.

716.24 Temporary Assignment to Higher Level — Bargaining

See 716.22, "Temporary Bargaining Assignments."

716.25 Temporary Assignment to Higher Level — Nonbargaining

716.251 Necessity

No one may be temporarily assigned to a higher-level nonbargaining position unless such an assignment is essential to the effective operations of the Postal Service, and the person selected assumes the full core responsibilities of the higher-level position.

Approval is required (See Exhibit 716.23 and sections 716.253 to 716.255.)

716.252 Higher-Management-Level Approval for Assignments of More Than 30 Calendar Days

When a temporary assignment or detail requiring travel and related expenses, or higher-level pay, is expected to last longer than 30 calendar days, the manager of the position must obtain approval from the next higher-level manager (unless a PCES manager originally approved the detail assignment). The request for approval for an extended-duty assignment or detail requiring extended travel away from the employee's permanent duty station must include the following information:

- a. Purpose of the assignment or detail;
- b. Cost;
- c. Benefit(s) expected;
- d. Consideration of alternatives; and
- e. Value to the Postal Service.

See also Handbook F-15, sections 2-2.1.2 and 4-1.2.1.

716.253 Higher-Level Assignments Limited to 90 Calendar Days Unless Extended
Temporary assignment to a higher-level position, during the absence of the incumbent, is limited to a maximum period of 90 calendar days. The period

may be extended with advance approval of the next higher level of management above the detailed position. *Exception:* If a PCES manager originally approved the detail assignment, then approval of the extension is not required.

See 716.252 for requirements when the temporary position or detail to a higher-level position also involves travel away from the employee's permanent duty station. See 716.254 and 743.16 when the higher-level temporary assignment is to a vacant position.

716.254 120-Day Time Limit

Temporary assignment to a higher-level vacant position, *pending selection of a person for permanent placement*, is limited to a total of not more than 120 calendar days. If the employee on temporary assignment could become or is a potential candidate for the vacant position, the higher-grade assignment must be terminated before the 121st day.

If the employee is not a candidate, the next higher-level manager over the manager with the vacancy may approve an extension of that employee's temporary assignment beyond 120 days, until a selection is made and the new employee assumes the position.

Exception: If a PCES manager originally approved the detail assignment, then approval of the extension is not required. See 743.16, "Exceptions to the 120-Calendar-Day Limit," for exceptions.

716.255 Temporary Assignments Exceeding 1 Year

Temporary assignments exceeding 1 year, including those that involve travel and associated expenses, require advance written approval from one of the following:

- a. The vice president of Area Retail & Delivery Operations;
- b. The vice president of Regional Processing;
- c. The vice president of Logistics (for detail to a field position); or
- d. The functional officer (for detail to a Headquarters and Headquarters Field position).

There must be a critical need to extend a temporary assignment beyond 1 year. The approving manager will notify the vice president, Controller, of the approval to ensure travel reimbursements are handled as required by law.

See Handbook F-15, section 2-2.1.2, for approval and notification requirements, and tax consequences of detail assignments exceeding 1 year.

716.3 Temporary Promotion and Promotion to a Temporary Position

716.31 General

In this section, "temporary promotion" refers to both temporary promotions to a nonbargaining position, and promotion to a temporary nonbargaining position.

Temporary promotion to a nonbargaining position that has no time limitation is limited to situations when it is impractical to fill a higher-level position by other temporary means. Such situations include, but are not limited to the following:

- a. Long-term absence of the incumbent; or

- b. A need to defer permanently filling a vacant position for a lengthy time period.

Promotion to a temporary nonbargaining position is limited to situations when the position is authorized for a specific limited duration to serve a temporary or transitional need.

716.32 **Selection Procedures**

Competitive procedures are used to fill a position through a temporary promotion. The vacancy announcement must clearly state that the appointment will not exceed a stated period. When the position is filled permanently, competitive or noncompetitive procedures may be used (see 743). An employee who served in a position through competitive temporary promotion is eligible to re compete for the position, regardless of the duration of the temporary promotion.

716.33 **Appointment Duration**

A temporary promotion may be made for a limited period, usually 2 years or less, depending upon need. If the employee's services are still needed in the assignment after the initial period expires, the employee may continue to serve, but it must be determined whether the situation is still temporary or whether the position should be filled permanently. A temporary promotion:

- a. May not exceed 1 year without approval of one of the following:
 - (1) The vice president of Area Retail & Delivery Operations;
 - (2) The vice president of Regional Processing;
 - (3) The vice president of Logistics (for field detail assignments); or
 - (4) The functional officer (for a Headquarters and Headquarters Field position).

The approving manager must notify the vice president, Controller (see 716.255 when travel is involved);

- b. Is documented on a PS Form 50, *Personnel Action*;
- c. Terminates on a specified date, unless extended;
- d. May be terminated at any time based on the needs of the Postal Service; and
- e. Does not make the employee ineligible to compete for the vacancy if the position is posted.

716.34 **Conditions of Temporary Promotion**

Applicants for temporary promotion must be informed of the conditions of the placement, including the expected duration. An employee selected for a temporary promotion will be required to sign an agreement covering the terms of the temporary promotion.

The purpose of the agreement will be to avoid any misunderstanding as to the conditions of the temporary promotion. The agreement must state that by accepting promotion to the temporary position, the position becomes the employee's position of record. The agreement must also address:

- a. The effect on the employee's salary during the temporary promotion;
- b. Relocation benefits, if any;
- c. Security clearance requirements, if applicable;
- d. The employee's ability to apply for other positions, including lateral reassignment at the grade of the position to which temporarily

promoted; and

- e. Reassignment to a comparable nonbargaining position at the end of the temporary promotion.

If before the temporary promotion is terminated, the competitive area where the position is located undergoes a reduction in force (RIF), the employee's rights are determined based on that position, not under the agreement that the employee signed.

717 **Positions Filled Permanently**

717.1 **Reassignment**

Reassignment is the permanent assignment with or without relocation of an employee to another established position with the same level in the same salary schedule, or to a position with an equivalent level in another salary schedule. The following policies apply to reassignment:

- a. *Reassignment to a bargaining position.* General policies and procedures governing reassignments to bargaining positions are contained in the applicable collective bargaining agreement. (See 72, "Bargaining Positions," and 76, "Bargaining Job-Qualification Standards," for detailed policies and procedures.)
- b. *Reassignment to a nonbargaining position.* The following apply:
 - (1) Management may reassign nonbargaining employees noncompetitively (see 743.11).
 - (2) Employees with saved grade may be considered noncompetitively for positions up to the level of their former position or at any intervening level.
 - (3) Employees who desire reassignment may also apply in the same way as employees who desire promotion consideration.
 - (4) An employee with a disability who desires reassignment should work through the appropriate Reasonable Accommodation Committee at the district, area, or headquarters level.
- c. *Mutual exchanges.* Career bargaining employees may exchange positions at the same level, if the exchange is approved by management at the installations involved, subject to the provisions of the applicable collective bargaining agreement. An exchange of positions does not necessarily mean that the employees involved take over the duty assignments of the positions.

Exclusions: Part-time flexible employees may not exchange positions with full-time employees, or bargaining employees with nonbargaining employees, or nonsupervisory employees with supervisory employees.

717.2 **Unassigned Employees**

Employees whose positions have been abolished are assigned in accordance with *Employee and Labor Relations Manual* (ELM) section 354, "Assignment of Unassigned Employees."

717.3 **Promotion**

717.31 **General**

A *promotion* is the permanent assignment with or without relocation of an

employee to an established position with a higher level than the employee's previous position, or to an established position with a higher than equivalent level in another schedule (see ELM section 413, "Promotion to Nonbargaining Unit Positions"). Restrictions on the promotion, or recommendation for promotion, of immediate relatives of nonbargaining employees are described in Chapter 5. The following policies apply to promotion:

- a. *Promotion to a bargaining position.* General principles governing promotions to bargaining positions are contained in the applicable collective bargaining agreement. (See 72, "Bargaining Positions.")
- b. *Promotion to a nonbargaining position.* General policies and procedures governing promotions to nonbargaining positions are contained in ELM section 350, "Assignment, Reassignment, and Promotion." (See 73 through 75 of this handbook for specific policies.)

717.32 **Competitive Procedures**

Except as otherwise indicated, competitive procedures apply to all permanent promotions.

717.33 **Exceptions to Competitive Procedures**

The following promotion actions are exempted from competitive promotion procedures:

- a. Promotion of an incumbent to a position reclassified at a higher level without significant change in duties and responsibilities.
- b. Promotion and assignment of current nonbargaining employees to higher-level nonbargaining positions under the conditions described in 74. This includes employees with retreat rights, those previously reduced in level, or those serving with saved grade.
- c. Promotion of an employee who satisfactorily completes an approved training program that specifically provides for promotion, if:
 - (1) The employee was selected for the program under competitive procedures; and
 - (2) The fact that selection could lead to promotion was made known to potential candidates for the program.

717.4 **Change to Lower Level**

Management may approve a nonbargaining employee's voluntary request for change to a vacant nonbargaining position at a lower grade consistent with section 743.11 and ELM section 354.23(f). An employee with a disability who desires noncompetitive change to a lower-level nonbargaining position should work through the appropriate Reasonable Accommodation Committee at the district, area, or headquarters level.

717.5 **Absent Employees**

717.51 **Not on Active Military Duty**

Employees on extended leave, including leave without pay, will also be considered, provided they are otherwise eligible and have applied for promotion. If the employee is selected for promotion, the personnel action is processed upon return to Postal Service duty. The date placed on the personnel action is the date the promotion would have occurred had the employee not been absent.

717.52 On Active Military Duty

717.521 Bidding on Positions

While on active military duty, employees continue to gain seniority and may bid on positions that become vacant during the employee's absence. A written or electronic notice must be submitted by the employee to Human Resources, or if appropriate, to the manager in charge, such as the postmaster, indicating the employee's interest to bid on specific positions. The following also apply:

- a. The bid must be processed and awarded in accordance with the appropriate collective bargaining agreement *as if the employee is actively employed*. If the position is awarded, a personnel action is initiated to place the employee in the newly gained position and pay scale and to assure that seniority is credited as specified by the appropriate collective bargaining agreement.
- b. Unsuccessful bids are retained until the desired position is gained or the employee resumes active employment upon return from military service.
- c. Training is deferred until they return for employees who gain a position for which there is contractually required training. Upon their return, employees will be required, in accordance with the respective collective bargaining agreement, to meet the training requirements.
- d. No personnel action is to be initiated until the employee completes the training requirement. In these cases, every effort must be made to train the employee upon return to work. The employee would only be awarded the position upon satisfactory completion of the required training.
- e. An audit trail documenting the bid submissions must be maintained.

717.522 Nonbargaining Positions

To be considered for nonbargaining positions, nonbargaining and bargaining employees on military duty must submit to Human Resources personnel a completed candidate profile for vacancies in desired positions and locations. Human Resources personnel will treat the profile as if it were an application when there is a vacancy in the desired position and location. The following also apply:

- a. The application is considered in accordance with the area of consideration noted on the announcement.
- b. Applications resulting in a nonselection are reconsidered for other vacancies as they occur in the desired position and location, until the applicant has been successfully selected.
- c. Applications from employees who are on active duty with the uniformed services are to be accepted at any time for subsequent consideration when an appropriate vacancy is announced.
- d. Nonbargaining employees on active military duty may also request reassignments to lateral or lower-level positions in accordance with the nonbargaining selection policy.
- e. Selected individuals are to be placed in the new position with the appropriate pay level by initiating a personnel action while in the leave-without-pay (LWOP) status.
- f. Human Resources must establish and retain an audit trail of the

selection activity.

- g. Upon the employee's return from active military service, the responsibility for submitting bids or applications for nonbargaining positions reverts to the employee.

718 **Vacancy File**

A vacancy file is established for all promotions made under the competitive procedures. (See 728.27 and 728.37 for bargaining procedures and 743.42 for nonbargaining procedures.)

72 Bargaining Positions

721 **Filling Positions**

Filling bargaining positions through assignment, reassignment, or promotion is subject to the provisions of the appropriate collective bargaining agreements. Except for provisions in the agreements covering excess and ill or injured employees, vacancies must be filled by promotion or reassignment within the appropriate craft and installation, if qualified bidders or applicants are available.

722 **Conversion to Full-Time Status**

A *full-time residual position* is filled by assigning an unassigned full-time employee or a full-time flexible employee. The conversion to full-time of a qualified *part-time* flexible employee with the same designation or occupation code as the vacancy should occur only after unassigned full-time employees have been assigned. Part-time flexible employees must be changed to full-time regular positions, if appropriate, within the installation in the order specified by the applicable collective bargaining agreement.

723 **Area of Consideration**

The area of consideration is described in the appropriate collective bargaining agreement. If necessary, the area may be expanded to eligible employees in other crafts at the same installation, and then to eligible employees at other installations.

724 **Position Requirements**

Requirements for individual duty assignments are included in qualification standards, vacancy announcements, or job postings. These requirements pertain to assignment, reassignment, or promotion. The following also apply:

- a. A vacancy announcement or job posting may include requirements in addition to those in the applicable qualification standard. These additional requirements include special requirements or computer skills and/or driving requirements that may be added. (See 725.2, "Appropriate Special Requirements," and 763.22, "Local Options for Basic Computer Skills and Driving Requirements.")
- b. Qualification standards are available for most bargaining positions in the Human Resources system of record. When a qualification standard exists for a specific bargaining position, its provisions must be followed.

(See 727.3, "No Qualification Standards," when a qualification standard is not available for a position.)

725 **Special Requirements**

725.1 **Identification, Justification, and Documentation**

Special requirements must be related to the job and must be justified to show that the particular requirement will enable applicants to perform critical job duties that they would otherwise be unable to do satisfactorily. Sufficient documentation must be available to show that special requirements are clearly job-related, and the documentation must be retained in the vacancy file.

725.2 **Appropriate Special Requirements**

Special requirements for bargaining positions must be written as knowledge, skill, or ability statements.

Examples of appropriate special requirements, if justified for a particular position, include:

- a. Knowledge of a language other than English.
- b. Knowledge of a particular computer-programming language that cannot readily be acquired after selection.

725.3 **Inappropriate Special Requirements**

Educational requirements, such as a bachelor's degree, or length of experience, such as 6 months of experience, are *not* appropriate as special requirements and must not be added locally. If education or experience requirements are listed on a qualification standard, they must *not* be modified. No examinations may be added, *except* as allowed for basic computer-skills requirements.

Other examples of inappropriate special requirements include:

- a. A requirement that could readily be met by a brief initial period of orientation and familiarization in the assignment.
- b. A requirement that unduly restricts the number of eligible candidates or favors a particular candidate.
- c. A requirement not immediately essential to the position, such as one based on a possible future assignment, except in the case of a trainee position where ability and potential to advance to higher levels in the occupation are required.

726 **Posting Requirements**

726.1 **General**

All vacant craft duty assignments that are not to be reverted must first be posted within the craft for filling in accordance with the applicable collective bargaining agreement. Bidders or applicants must meet all requirements before being placed into the position. When posting does not result in successful bidders or applicants, the following may be used to fill the position:

- a. Reassignment.
- b. Change to lower level.
- c. Promotion.

- d. Reinstatement. (See 233.33, "Reinstatement and Reemployment.")
- e. Transfer from another federal agency. (See 233.34, "Transfer From Another Federal Entity.")
- f. Other external appointment.

726.2 **Entry Positions in PS-5 and Below**

Entry-level promotional opportunities to residual vacancies remaining after exhausting the bidding or application procedures need not be posted. However, procedures must be developed locally to inform lower-level employees of promotional opportunities and to arrange for appropriate in-service examinations for employees who have not already qualified.

Management must encourage employees to apply. Managers must also extend every opportunity for promotion to employees who are eligible, qualified, and available before recruiting from external sources.

Employees on active military duty may leave bids or applications for future bargaining vacancies with Human Resources, or an appropriate manager, for actualization when posting occurs.

726.3 **Senior Qualified Positions**

Senior qualified positions must be posted in accordance with the appropriate collective bargaining agreement.

726.4 **Best Qualified Positions**

Best qualified positions must be posted in accordance with the appropriate collective bargaining agreement. The following must be included in job postings for best qualified positions only:

- a. Position by title, number, level, and duties.
- b. Location, tour of duty, and scheduled workweek.
- c. Existing job requirements. If a qualification standard is available in the Human Resources system of record, it must be used.
- d. Instructions regarding where to send applications, the date by which applications must be submitted, and where additional information may be obtained.
- e. Specification that selection will be made from among the best qualified applicants who are eligible and available.
- f. Craft designation, in accordance with the applicable collective bargaining agreement.
- g. Statement on equal employment opportunity.
- h. Statement on prohibition of political recommendations.

727 **Bargaining Selection Procedures**

727.1 **General**

The goal of bargaining selection procedures, whether for entry or in-service positions, is to ensure that qualified people are selected to fill the positions. Eligibles selected, promoted, or reassigned at any level must meet all the requirements of the position as stated on the qualification standard, and the vacancy announcement or job posting.

Employees fully meet the physical requirements of a position if they are physically able to perform the essential functions of the position, with or without

reasonable accommodation where appropriate, and without posing a direct threat of harm to themselves or others. (See Handbook EL-307, *Reasonable Accommodation, An Interactive Process*.)

721.2 **Qualification Standards**

Bargaining qualification standards, available in the Human Resources system of record, include the requirements that all bidders or applicants must meet to be eligible for placement in the position. The qualification standards are applicable when filling both entry and inservice positions.

Additional requirements for positions may be established only as specified in 725, "Special Requirements," and 76, "Bargaining Job-Position Qualification Standards." These additional requirements must be specified on the job posting or vacancy announcement. Subchapter 76 contains further instructions on using qualification standards.

727.3 **No Qualification Standards**

Some bargaining positions do not have qualification standards.

Requirements for these positions must be developed locally and be included in the vacancy announcement or job posting. Appropriate documentation used to develop requirements must be retained in the vacancy file.

727.4 **When to Evaluate Qualifications**

Human Resources personnel are obligated to ensure that successful bidders have demonstrated that they meet all the position requirements, including the following:

- a. *Bidding for a change in schedule.* When a bid is to a position of the same title and level in order to obtain a change in the work schedule, an evaluation of qualifications is limited to computer skills or driving requirements and special requirements, if any, that may be different from those in the current duty assignment.
- b. *Bidding to return to a position previously held.* When a bid is to return to a position that the bidder previously held, appropriate records must be reviewed to determine if the requirements for the position are the same as when the bidder originally obtained the position. The following apply:
 - (1) If any requirements have changed, the bidder must meet all new requirements, regardless of how long it has been since the bidder left the position.
 - (2) An eligible bidder may be disqualified on a current bid if the bidder was previously taken out of the same or similar position for not meeting a job requirement.
 - (3) Similarly, a record of pending removal in a previous position may also be justification for disqualification. In both cases, the amount of time passed between bidding out and bidding back, and the bidder's record in the interim must be considered.

726.5 **Timing and Sequence of Evaluation**

Specifications regarding time frames and sequences appropriate to the evaluation process, included elsewhere in this chapter and in the collective bargaining agreements, state that while applicants and/or bidders must *meet the requirements* of the position, not all the requirements must necessarily be demonstrated at the same time.

For example, after a senior bidder has been found to meet all other requirements of a position with training requirements, the bidder is placed

into training and then must demonstrate satisfactory completion of the training.

Also, an applicant or bidder may be awarded a position pending review of the applicant's or bidder's driving-history records and driver's license to ensure its validity. (See 516, "Driving History," and 517.5, "Driver's License Review.") Evaluators, review committees, and selecting officials must take such sequences into account when evaluating qualifications or requesting that applicants and bidders demonstrate their qualifications.

727.6 **Evaluating Qualifications**

When qualifications are evaluated, applicants and bidders are obligated to demonstrate that their qualifications meet the requirements. If there is insufficient information to establish a senior bidder's qualifications, information from the bidder is requested after the posting closes. (See 728.23, "Bidding and Qualifications.")

If an applicant or bidder does not meet all the position's requirements, including an examination, the person is not qualified and, therefore, not eligible for further consideration. (See 714.1b for an explanation of meeting the requirements, and 727.5 for information on when requirements must be met.)

727.7 **Pertinent Information**

In evaluating qualifications, evaluators must consider available pertinent information that shows whether the employee meets the qualifications. Pertinent information may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- a. Interviews.
- b. Supervisory appraisals.
- c. The written application specifying *verified* experience, education, and training.
- d. Certificates of course completion or transcripts, accompanied by a school catalog specifying course content, when requested.
- e. Examination results.
- f. Personnel records.

Note: Interviews for best qualified positions must be used as specified in 728.35, "Conducting Interviews." For senior qualified positions, interviews must be used as specified in 728.24d.

728 **Selection Procedures**

728.1 **Placement Principles**

The following includes standards for selecting employees for placement under the senior qualified and best qualified procedures:

- a. *Senior qualified positions.* Employee placement into positions filled through senior qualified procedures must be based on the following:
 - (1) The employee's eligibility to bid.
 - (2) The employee's seniority.
 - (3) The senior bidder's qualifications related to the requirements.

- (4) The employee's successful completion of required training, if any.
- b. *Best qualified positions.* Employee placement into positions filled through best qualified procedures must be based on:
 - (1) The employee's eligibility to apply.
 - (2) The best qualifications among employees who have met the requirements.
 - (3) The employee's successful completion of required training, if any.

728.2 Senior Qualified Positions

728.21 General

Senior qualified bidders who meet the position requirements of the qualification standards stated on the job posting are placed into the position, or into training for the position, in accordance with the appropriate collective bargaining agreement. Human Resources personnel are responsible for ensuring that qualifications are evaluated for bids to all senior qualified positions (see 727.5, "Timing and Sequence of Evaluation,").

728.22 Documentation of Qualifications

In many cases, there is no need to document the evaluation of the senior bidder's qualifications. When such documentation is required, the evaluator must complete PS Form 1796-A, *Qualifications Rating Sheet for Senior Qualified Positions*.

728.23 Bidding and Qualifications

Bidders for senior qualified positions submit bids in accordance with the provisions of the appropriate collective bargaining agreement (i.e., by telephone, computer, or in writing) using PS Form 1717, *Bid for Preferred Assignment*. Following the close of the posting, the senior bidder's qualifications should be evaluated through a review of the employee's OPF and any other pertinent information available. (See 727.4, "When to Evaluate Qualifications," and 727.5, "Timing and Sequence of Evaluation,")

If there is *sufficient* information to show that the senior bidder meets the job requirements, the senior bidder is presumed to be qualified. Otherwise, the 5 senior bidders must be requested to address the position requirements, in writing, following these procedures:

- a. The 5 most senior bidders are each asked to furnish in writing his or her qualifications for the position; however, any currently qualified through previous qualification are *not* subject to this requirement. (See 727.4b, "Bidding to return to a position previously held.")
- b. A copy of the qualification standard must be provided to the bidders. If the position does not have a qualification standard, a copy of the posting showing the requirements must be provided to the bidders.
- c. Bidders are allowed at least 3 days to respond. They must record their qualifications on PS Form 991, *Application for Promotion or Assignment*, and return it by the deadline specified.
- d. If an examination is required that is usually given after the posting closes, the 5 senior bidders — at a minimum — are scheduled for the examination, unless currently qualified.
- e. If there are less than 5 bidders for a position, these procedures apply to

all who bid.

728.24 **Evaluating Qualifications**

If an examination is required, any existing examination scores are obtained for the bidders.

A qualification evaluator from Human Resources considers the senior bidder's qualifications compared to the position requirements, as follows:

- a. The evaluator may review the employee's eOPF and other official records that contain pertinent information, and, if necessary, contact the bidder and/or an appropriate supervisor for clarification.
- b. If written statements were obtained, the evaluator must complete PS Form 1796-A, *Qualifications Rating Sheet for Senior Qualified Positions*, for the senior bidder.
- c. Only if the senior bidder is found to be *not qualified* will the next senior bidder be evaluated, and PS Form 1796-A completed for that bidder.
- d. The evaluator may conduct interviews to supplement the written record to establish whether a bidder meets specific requirements. Interviews for a senior qualified position must not be used to rank or selectively choose among bidders.

728.25 **Using PS Form 1796-A**

PS Form 1796-A is used to document that the senior bidder meets all the position's requirements. This form must *not* be used if the senior bidder is determined to be qualified from the eOPF review. However, if the 5 senior bidders have been requested to address their qualifications on PS Form 991, the evaluator must complete PS Form 1796-A to document the evaluation process for the senior bidder as follows:

- a. In Column A, "Identification of Requirements," the evaluator lists the examination requirements, knowledge, skills, and abilities, and any other requirements for the position.
- b. In Column B, "Demonstration," the evaluator must decide whether the senior bidder has demonstrated each requirement based on the information available. If the bidder failed a required examination, the bidder is not qualified and no additional information is needed on PS Form 1796-A. Similarly, if the position requires driving, and the bidder failed a driver's license checklist review (see 517.5, "Driver's License Review"), the bidder is not qualified, and no additional information is needed on PS Form 1796-A.
- c. In Column C, "Measurements Used," the evaluator *must* explain how the determination for each requirement was made. The statements may be brief, but must provide enough information to enable the evaluator to recall the facts that led to the decision. This column is not completed for examination requirements.
- d. The evaluator completes Section 3, "Finding," checking "Qualified" if the bidder has demonstrated every requirement. If the evaluator checked "No" in Column B for one or more requirements, the bidder is not qualified. (See 727.5, "Timing and Sequence of Evaluation," which includes information on timing and sequences for bidders to meet some requirements.)

728.26 **Selecting the Senior Bidder**

When the evaluation is completed, the senior bidder is selected for the

position if qualified. An evaluation of the next senior bidder's qualifications is not necessary when the senior bidder is selected.

728.27 Vacancy File

Appropriate documentation, including PS Forms 1796-A (if completed), PS Forms 1717, *Bid for Preferred Assignment*, the posting; and written statements (if obtained) must be maintained with employee bidding records.

728.3 Best Qualified Positions

728.31 General

Qualifications help selecting officials determine the relative standing for selecting career employees who are eligible to apply for such positions based on applicable collective bargaining agreements. Of those applicants who meet all requirements, the applicant who is found to be the best qualified based on total qualifications will be selected. This determination is made based on comparing total qualifications among applicants for the position. (See 728.37, "Selection of Best Qualified Applicant.")

728.32 Selecting Official

For filling best qualified positions, the selecting official is usually the supervisor or manager with the vacancy. Bargaining employees serving as acting supervisors may not serve as selecting officials. The selecting official has numerous options regarding review committees and interviews. These options are described in the sections that follow. If recommendations are made to the selecting official from a review committee, the selecting official may have access to all information used by the review committee, including completed PS Forms 1796-B, *Qualifications Rating Sheet for Best Qualified Positions*.

728.33 Documentation of Qualifications

728.331 General

The initial determination of qualifications is documented on PS Form 1796-B, *Qualifications Rating Sheet for Best Qualified Positions*. The review committee, or in the absence of a review committee the selecting official, completes this form for every applicant.

728.332 Applications and Qualifications

Applicants for best qualified positions are required to describe their qualifications in writing. (See 765.2, "Best Qualified Positions.") PS Form 991, *Application for Promotion or Assignment*, must be used for this purpose. Applicants must address each requirement listed on the qualification standard or posting, including desirable qualifications, if any. Applications must be submitted by the deadline specified.

728.333 Desirable Qualifications

Desirable qualifications may be locally added to the posting for best qualified positions. If used, they must be related to the position and documented on the job posting. However, they may not be used as a basis for disqualification.

728.334 Evaluating Qualifications

The qualifications of all applicants are compared to the position requirements stated on the vacancy announcement or job posting. At a minimum, applicants' written statements are reviewed by selection officials and review committee members.

The applicants' eOPFs and other official records may be reviewed; however, it is recommended that the selecting official review the eOPF of the person to be selected before finalizing the decision. The selecting official's decision whether to use a review committee usually is based on the number of applicants and the time available to the selecting official to review the applications.

728.34 Review Committees

728.341 General

The function of the review committee is to evaluate the applicants' qualifications and eligibility for the position, to conduct interviews if appropriate (see 728.35, "Conducting Interviews"), and to make recommendations to the selecting official on the best qualified applicants. The selecting official may also choose to have the review committee determine the best qualified applicant.

728.342 Review Committee Structure

All review committee members must be nonbargaining employees. Usually a committee will consist of 2 nonbargaining employees from the functional area of the vacancy, and 1 from outside the functional area.

A selecting official who asks a review committee to *determine* the best qualified applicant may also be a member of the committee. However, a selecting official who asks a review committee to *recommend* those who best meet the requirements of the position must not be a member of the committee.

728.343 Review Committee Procedures

Review committee procedures follow the principles of independent work and consensus decision-making. Specific steps are:

- a. Each committee member must independently determine if the applicants have demonstrated each requirement.
- b. Members must discuss their decisions collectively and arrive at a consensus for each requirement for each applicant.
- c. The committee chairperson must complete PS Form 1796-B through Column B based on this consensus for each applicant. Applicants found not qualified at this stage are removed from further consideration for this vacancy. For those applicants who are not qualified, the chairperson completes Column D and Section 5, and obtains signatures for Section 6 of PS Form 1796-B.
- d. For applicants who are qualified, individual review committee members must then determine the level of demonstration of each requirement by each applicant.
- e. Members should then discuss their decisions collectively and arrive at a consensus on the level of demonstration of each requirement by each applicant.
- f. The chairperson completes a PS Form 1796-B for each applicant, and all members sign the form.
- g. If the review committee conducts applicant interviews, it must select applicants based on the highest point totals on PS Form 1796-B. There is no set minimum or maximum number of applicants to interview. Applicants who are tied in point totals must be treated equally. Either all

applicants are interviewed, or no applicants are interviewed.

Note: Applicants found not qualified must not be interviewed.

- h. If the review committee makes recommendations to the selecting official, but does not interview applicants, about 3 to 5 applicants (there is no set minimum or maximum number), are recommended based on the highest point totals on PS Form 1796-B. The following also apply:
 - (1) Applicants who are tied in point totals must be treated the same. Either they are all recommended, or none of them are recommended.
 - (2) The review committee must prepare a signed memorandum to the selecting official listing, in alphabetical order, the names of the recommended applicants.
- i. If the review committee interviews applicants and makes recommendations to the selecting official, about 3 to 5 applicants (there is no set minimum or maximum number) are recommended. The following also apply:
 - (1) No formal method exists for incorporating the results of the interview.
 - (2) The review committee must recommend only those applicants who best meet the position requirements based on the point totals from PS Form 1796-B, the interview, and any other pertinent information reviewed during the evaluation.
 - (3) The review committee must prepare a signed memorandum to the selecting official listing, in alphabetical order, the names of the recommended applicants.
- j. If the selecting official asks the review committee to determine who is the best qualified applicant, then the committee makes no recommendations to the selecting official. In this case, the review committee must:
 - (1) Interview the potential applicants.
 - (2) Determine the best qualified applicant based on the point totals from PS Form 1796-B, the interview, and any other pertinent information reviewed during the evaluation.
 - (3) Consider any desirable qualifications.
 - (4) Prepare a signed memorandum to the manager of Human Resources listing the names of the best qualified applicant and 2 alternates in rank order.

728.35

Conducting Interviews

Interviews provide additional information for comparing applicants' qualifications. Interviews are mandatory and may be conducted by the selecting official, the review committee, or both. Interviews must be conducted only after completing PS Forms 1796-B. No documentation of the interviews is required.

Review committee members must reach consensus on combining the interview results with the point totals from PS Forms 1796-B (and other pertinent information) to finalize their recommendations or determination of the best qualified applicant.

728.36 Using PS Form 1796-B

PS Form 1796-B documents whether an applicant has demonstrated all position requirements, and, if so, the level of the applicant's qualifications. Interviews are not documented on PS Form 1796-B. The following are instructions for correctly using PS Form 1796-B:

- a. In Column A, "Identification of Requirements," the review committee or selecting official lists all the position requirements. These are divided into:
 - (1) *Examination requirements;*
 - (2) *Physical and driving requirements;* and
 - (3) *Knowledge, skills, and abilities* (qualification standards). Desirable qualifications are not listed as requirements (see 714.1f).
- b. In Column B, "Demonstration," based on the information available, the review committee determines whether the applicant has demonstrated each requirement. If the applicant does not meet all requirements (i.e., if the evaluator checked "No" under "Demonstrated" for any requirement), the applicant is not qualified and Column C is not completed.

Note: If the applicant failed a required examination, the applicant is not qualified, and no additional information is needed on PS Form 1796-B.
- c. In Column C, "Points," information is entered only for those applicants who meet all the position requirements as established in Column B. The review committee or selecting official assigns points to indicate the level of qualifications demonstrated by the applicant. No points are assigned for driving or physical requirements.
- d. In Column D, "Measurements Used," the review committee or selecting official must explain briefly how the decision was made. These statements need not include all facts considered.
- e. In Section 4, "Score Calculation," the total points in Column C are averaged and multiplied by 20. The maximum points that may be earned from the evaluation are 100. The examination score, if any, is then added to this score to obtain the total points.
- f. In Section 5, "Finding," the results of the evaluation of the applicant's qualifications are summarized.

728.37 Selecting Best Qualified Applicant

Selection for the position will be based on total qualifications, considering the point totals on PS Forms 1796-B, the results of the interviews, desirable qualifications (if any), and other pertinent information reviewed during the evaluation.

728.38 Selection Oversight

It is imperative that selecting officials, review committee members for best qualified positions, and evaluators for senior qualified positions, know the scope of their responsibilities and how to correctly apply the principles of selection. It is helpful, but not mandatory, to include a nonbargaining Human Resources employee on each review committee for a best qualified position.

728.39 Vacancy File

The vacancy file must contain full documentation supporting the selection decision. The file and documentation must be maintained and retained for 5

years. This documentation includes:

- a. A copy of the announcement;
- b. The qualification standard;
- c. Applications;
- d. PS Forms 1796-B;
- e. A list of review committee members; and
- f. The name of the selecting official.

Notes that individual review committee members made are the members' property, not Postal Service records, and, therefore, are not included in the vacancy file.

73 Reserved

This section reserved for future use.

74 Nonbargaining Positions

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75 Supervisor Selection Process

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76 Bargaining Job-Qualification Standards

761 Purpose

The purpose of job-qualification standards is to establish selection criteria so that Postal Service positions are staffed with fully qualified persons whose job performance will provide effective customer service and efficient Postal Service operations. Qualification standards include the minimum knowledge, skills, abilities, and other requirements that are essential for successful job performance.

Some qualification standards may also include desirable qualification factors that may be used in selecting applicants for best qualified positions.

762 Scope

Bargaining job descriptions contain qualification standards for use in both entrance and in-service placements for bargaining jobs. Qualification standards may not currently be available for all jobs covered by collective bargaining agreements. (See 727, "Bargaining Selection Procedures," when selections are being made for such positions.)

763 Human Resources System of Record and Contents

763.1 General

Current qualification standards are maintained in the Human Resources system of record. These include:

- a. *Occupation code.* Each bargaining unit job is uniquely identified by an occupation code. The occupation code identifies the job and connects it to a specific job title and pay grade.
- b. *Knowledge Skills and Abilities (KSAs).* The qualification standards for each job are part of the job description and list the requirements for the job.

763.2 Contents of Qualification Standards

763.21 Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities Requirements

This section of a qualification standard contains the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSA) requirements.

763.22 Local Options for Basic Computer Skills and Driving Requirements

763.221 General

Some job qualification standards do not specify basic computer skills or driving requirements. However, the ability to use a computer, drive, or both, may be essential to efficiently performing some duty assignments. When filling any vacant position with no officially published basic computer skills or driving requirements listed on the qualification standards, local management may add:

- a. Exam 718, "Basic Computer Skills Test"; and/or
- b. A driving requirement to operate a motor vehicle or powered industrial equipment.

Basic computer skills or driving requirements must be reasonably related to efficiently performing the duties of the job, and local management may only add these requirements when the applicant is expected to use computer skills or drive regularly in the position.

Local management may not modify or delete existing basic computer skills or driving requirements in official qualification standards.

763.222 **Basic Computer Skills**

If the selecting official adds a basic computer skills requirement to the qualification standards of the job, the selecting official must include the following statement on the job posting or vacancy announcement:

"Applicants must demonstrate basic computer skills as demonstrated by successful completion of Postal Service Exam 718."

763.223 **Driving Requirements**

If a selecting official adds driving as a requirement for the position, the selecting official must include one of the following statements on the job posting or vacancy announcement, as appropriate to the position:

- a. "Applicants must have or be able to obtain authorization to operate a motor vehicle."
- b. "Applicants must have or be able to obtain authorization to operate powered industrial equipment."

763.23 **Physical Requirements**

Physical requirements are included in some qualification standards. These requirements are intended primarily for applicants who are entering the Postal Service. Medical assessments for in-service applicants or bidders are administered only when the physical requirements for the new positions are more demanding than those required in the employee's current position.

All employees must be physically able to perform the essential functions of the positions for which they are applying, with or without reasonable accommodation where appropriate, and without posing a direct threat of harm to themselves or others.

763.24 **Examination Requirements**

763.241 **General**

Examination requirements may include a performance test, a rated application, or a written examination. The "Examination Requirements" section of the qualification standard will specify if an examination is required. See 233.12, which describes when substitutions for examination requirements are permitted.

763.242 **Rated Applications**

A rated application is a method of evaluating and rating applicants' experience and training to determine applicants' qualifications for specific positions. The "Examination Requirements" section of some qualification standards will specify that the position is *filled by rated application*.

In such cases, the rated application is to be used only for entrance and in-service application procedures. Rated applications are *not* used for in-craft applications. The following situations apply to rated applications:

- a. *Bid Procedures*. When a position is being filled through bid procedures and the qualification standard for this position specifies a rated application, the rated application is not used in this instance. However, any examination specified in the qualification standard is required. Human Resources must ensure that bidders for these positions meet all requirements specified in the qualification standard.

b. *Reviewing Qualifications.* When a rated application is used for in-service application procedures, officials are required to review the applicant's qualifications, and to complete a PS Form 1796-A after receiving the following:

- (1) The individual's rated-application score; and
- (2) Any other applicable test scores.

763.243 Examination Development and Using Results

Except for scheme examinations, examinations are developed by or at the direction of Organizational Effectiveness. In cases where a written examination is required, the results of that examination must be used according to the terms of the applicable collective bargaining agreement. Applicants or bidders who have previously qualified on a written examination are not required to retake the examination.

763.25 Experience Requirements

Many qualification standards contain experience requirements. These are minimum requirements that all applicants must meet. Substituting education or training for experience is appropriate only as indicated in the qualification standard.

764 Using Qualification Standards to Fill Vacancies

Vacancies to be filled by bid or application are posted in accordance with the applicable collective bargaining agreement and 72, "Bargaining Positions." The qualification standard appropriate for the particular position must be included in the announcement. No additions, deletions, or modifications are permitted, except as provided by 725, "Special Requirements," and 727.3, "No Qualification Standards."

765 Selection Decisions

765.1 Senior Qualified Positions

For bargaining positions filled based on *senior qualified*, the senior bidder's qualifications are compared to the published qualification standard. The senior bidder is selected if qualified. (See 72, "Bargaining Positions.")

765.2 Best Qualified Positions

For bargaining positions filled based on *best qualified*, all applicants are required to describe their qualifications based on relevant education, training, or experience. This description must address the requirements on the qualification standard. If there is no appreciable difference in qualifications, seniority is considered, except if it will be the determining factor as required by a collective bargaining agreement.

766 Waiver of Qualification Requirements

766.1 Actions Before Requests for Waivers

Applicants for positions for which standards have been published must fully meet the specified requirements. If a selecting official determines that there is no qualified employee available for consideration in the usual area of consideration, the following alternative courses of action must be taken before requesting a waiver of the specified standard for the position:

- a. Expand the area of consideration for internal applicants.

- b. Conduct an extensive external recruitment effort aimed at the applicant pool for the position.

766.2 **Approving Authority and Procedures**

When there is valid reason to request a variation from a published standard, the following procedures are followed:

- a. The selecting official must request, in writing, a variation of 1 or more items of a qualification standard through usual channels of communications to the director of Organizational Effectiveness.
- b. Requests for variation must include appropriate evidence to support the request. Such requests must be responsive to the following questions, and include any other pertinent information:
 - (1) Have adequate recruiting efforts been made to secure a fully qualified applicant (i.e., expansion of area of consideration, advertising, contacts with professional community groups, and use of employment services, etc.)?
 - (2) What is the impact of the variation on the equal employment opportunity policy of the Postal Service?
 - (3) Does the variation seek to lower an established educational requirement?
 - (4) Does the variation establish a new education requirement where none has been required? (Mandatory education requirements should not be necessary for most bargaining positions.)
- c. Requests must be for qualification standards for the position only, never for an individual. If the waiver is approved, the selection process must begin again, and the revised standards for that position used. All newly eligible applicants must be given consideration for the job.
- d. The qualification requirement waiver applies only until the position is filled. Subsequent vacancies for the same position must be posted using the published qualification standard.
- e. Usually an employee may be selected for a position that has the requirements waived only once in any 12-month period.

766.3 **Documentation**

The written request for variation from a qualification standard must be addressed as specified in 766.2a and include the information specified in 766.2b. The request must provide approving officials with the information necessary to reach a decision and provide employees with a record of an approved variation. The request will also serve as a record of the variation for inclusion in the vacancy file.

77 Employment Restoration After Military Service

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