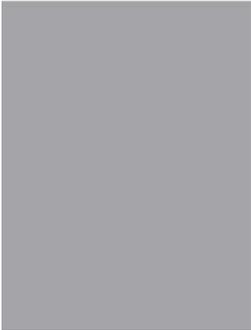


CIVILIAN HIRING GUIDE FOR SUPERVISORS AND MANAGERS



Civilian Hiring Guide

For Supervisors and Managers of USCG Civilian Employees

Updated 2 February 2026

Introduction

This Guide is intended to help supervisors and managers understand the civilian hiring process and the important role they have during the various phases. Following this guide and working closely with the HR Specialist will ensure that selecting officials have a robust applicant pool to select the best qualified candidates.

The Office of Personnel Management's Merit Hiring Plan dated 29 May 2025, and subsequent regulatory changes have introduced numerous changes to the hiring process. This Guide incorporates several initiatives and will be updated as changes occur.

Hiring is a shared responsibility among HR Specialists, selecting officials, applicants, and others. Throughout the process it is critical to understand that management of human resources is based on and embodies the Merit System Principles which are established in Title 5, United States Code, Section 2301. These principles are the public's expectations of a system that is efficient, effective, fair, open to all, free from political interference, and staffed by honest, competent, and dedicated individuals.

Civilian recruitment requests may be made, with Civilian Resources Coordinator (CRC) approval for vacant PAL positions or for encumbered PAL positions with an approved multi-encumber request from CG-8. Title, Series, and Grade should match the PAL for each recruitment. In cases where there is a discrepancy with PAL, management will work with their servicing HR Specialist to determine the process required to align the information on PAL with the official classification on the subject position. For more information on PAL reprogramming, please visit [CG-811 PAL Team - PAL Reprogramming \(PRR\)](#). For more information on the PAL and topics like multi-encumberance, please see [CIM_5312_14](#).

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Coast Guard Notional Hiring Timeline (Interim)

Hiring Process Actions (PSC-CPM-1 Tracking Steps Included in Parentheses)	Performance	
	Owner	Process Step Goal - # of Calendar Days OPM Goal = 80 Days
Pre-recruitment		30 days prior to Recruitment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and Update Position Description (PD)* 	Hiring Official /HR Specialist	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete Recruitment Action Checklist (RAC), determine recruitment strategy, area of consideration, working conditions, and assessment type (based on decision tree in RAC). 	Hiring Official	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit a recruitment case in USAS, that includes a completed SF-52 with all needed signatures, including the CRC for funding validation**. Completed case must include classified PD and completed RAC. 	Hiring Official/CRC	
RECRUITMENT TIMELINE BEGINS		
Preparing the Job Opportunity Announcement (PSC-CPM-1 Process Step – Validate Need to Post)		7 Days
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare job analysis. Determine appropriate Assessment to be used and any related steps. 	HR Specialist/Hiring Official	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft job opportunity announcement. 	HR Specialist	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and approve the job opportunity announcement. 	Hiring Official	
Job Opportunity Announcement Open Period PSC-CPM-1 Process Step – Vacancy Open Period)	Applicants/HR Specialist/Hiring Official	10 Days
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applicants identify position in USAJOBS 	Applicants	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applicants submit resume, required documents, and completed assessments. 	Applicants	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision to extend job opportunity announcement may be made. 	Hiring Official/HR Specialist	
Referral (PSC-CPM-1 Process Step – Vacancy Close to Certificate Issuance)		15 Days
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review applications for completeness. 	HR Specialist	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct eligibility determination, qualifications analysis, and veterans preference determination 	HR Specialist	

• Conduct SME Panel review (if needed)	HR Specialist/SME Panel	
• Issue certificates via USAS system.	HR Specialist	
Selection (PSC-CPM-1 Process Step – Selection Process)		45 Days
• Review Applications	Hiring Official	
• Conduct Interviews	Hiring Official	
• Check References	Hiring Official	
• Select and Return Certificate(s)	Hiring Official	
Extend Tentative Job Offer (PSC-CPM-1 Process Step – Extend Job Offer)		
• Tentative Job Offer and Acceptance	HR Specialist/Selectee	3 days
• Initiate Security Check, if needed	HR Specialist/Selectee	Not included in 80 day goal
• Schedule Drug Test and/or physical, if applicable	HR Specialist/Selectee	Not included in 80 day goal
• Request and Review Recruitment Incentive Requests	HR Specialist/Selectee	Not included in 80 day goal
Entry on Duty (PSC-CPM-1-Process Step – Offer to EOD)	HR Specialist/Selectee	Not included in 80 day goal
Total		80 Days

*Supervisors and managers **must** use standard position descriptions (PDs) from the PD Library if the position is covered. Use of generic PDs are strongly encouraged but not mandatory. Standard and generic PDs help to shorten the classification process and save significant time for both supervisors/managers and Civilian Human Resources. New position descriptions not in the PD Library must go through the classification process which takes approximately two weeks after the **complete** case is submitted in FedHR. Complete cases include, the draft position description, the Position Description Coversheet (OF-8), the Position Designation Record, an organizational chart, and the PRR or Organization Modification Request associated with the request. The notional hiring timeline does not include the classification process. Submit new position descriptions for classification prior to submitting SF-52 Request for Personnel Action for Recruitment.

** The Civilian Vacancy Clearance Process is the governing mechanism to clear USCG civilian vacancies based on exemptions and exceptions to the ongoing federal hiring freeze. The process also monitors a workflow into PSC-CPM-1 with a focus on balancing recruitment action submissions while still prioritizing hiring of established critical need positions and command priorities. CRCs will only validate vacancies cleared in the [Civilian Vacancy Clearance Process](#) for recruitment.

The Coast Guard Notional Hiring Timeline chart is provided to give general timeframes and goals for completion for Civilian Human Resources staff and supervisors/managers. Although the Civilian Personnel Management Division (PSC-CPM) strives to meet the timeframes provided, there are many things that can impact timelines including: requests for recruitment incentives, delayed submission of security paperwork by the applicant or need to complete the full security process, requests for permanent change in station moves, delays in reporting by the applicant, staff shortages, and competing priorities for both PSC-CPM and supervisors/managers.

CHAPTER 1. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

This chapter describes the roles and responsibilities typically performed by the following:

Section A. Hiring Official

Section B. Human Resources (HR) Specialist

Section C. Civilian Recruitment Team

Section D. Applicant

Section E. Selectee

A. Hiring Official

1. Manages vacancies within assigned unit to include monitoring and ensuring that all position information is correct in the Personnel Allowance Listing (PAL).
2. Ensures Position Descriptions (PDs) are accurate and as necessary, revises current or writes new PDs.
3. Complies with local bargaining unit agreements.
4. Determines appropriate recruitment strategies after consultation with HR Specialist.
5. Determines if position is telework or remote work eligible.
6. In consultation with HR Specialist, completes job analyses, as well as approves assessments (for certain positions) and job opportunity announcements to ensure accuracy of duties, responsibilities, qualification requirements, and assessment criteria.
7. Understands and avoids Prohibited Personnel Practices and abides by Merit Systems Principles.
8. Abides by Coast Guard policy in Commandant Instructions, including the policies outlined in Commandant Instruction 12335.4B, Coast Guard Merit Promotion Plan, [CI 12335.4B](#) and Commandant Instruction 12310.3B, Restrictions on the Employment of Relatives and Advocating for the Employment of Relatives, [CI 12310.3C](#).
9. Avoids any perception of potential impropriety in the hiring process, (i.e., does not discuss or share hiring information other than the job opportunity announcement with potential applicants, does not work on any position for which he/she may consider applying).
10. Interviews candidates, conducts reference checks, and makes timely selections in accordance with CI 12335.4B and Command SOPs/guidance.
11. Applies the proper and appropriate selection procedures and ensures that interview notes are maintained in accordance with established requirements.

B. Human Resources Specialist – The HR Specialist assists with the serviced organization’s recruitment and hiring procedures. [Civilian HR Contacts](#)

1. Advises management on development and use of position descriptions and classifies positions.
2. Advises management on recruitment strategies necessary to ensure a sufficient applicant pool.
3. Advises management on a variety of recruitment strategies that may be used to help build the continuity of talent within the unit. Determines when collaboration with the Civilian Recruitment Team may be of assistance to management.
4. Prepares draft job opportunity announcements, assists management with the review of the draft job opportunity announcement to ensure positions are properly advertised, identifies assessment type, and if needed, assessment criteria are appropriately defined, and posts final job opportunity announcements.
5. Makes qualifications determinations, and reviews applicants for eligibility, minimum qualifications, and veterans preference.
6. Provides guidance on the Subject Matter Expert Resume Review Panel process.
7. Issues certificates of eligibles.
8. Responds to applicant inquiries.
9. Advises management on how to properly review and use certificates of eligibles.
10. Advises management on interview techniques and selection panel procedures.
11. Advises management on adhering to local bargaining unit agreements.
12. Ensures selections are made in accordance with Federal laws and regulations; and with merit promotion and delegated examining policies and procedures.
13. Makes tentative and firm job offers.
14. Advises/guides management on incentives requested by tentative selectees. Reviews incentives requests submitted by management, ensuring that requests are legally compliant, and all required documents are obtained. Submits requests to PSC-CPM-1 with recommendations for approval/disapproval in advance of the appointment date.
15. Initiates necessary pre-employment actions to bring new employees on-board which may include the following:
 - a. Providing the selectee with appropriate pre-processing forms.
 - b. Scheduling pre-employment physical exams.
 - c. Providing the Office of Security Policy and Management (CG-SPM) with security documents provided by the applicant.
 - d. Contacting the Drug Program Coordinator to coordinate a pre-employment drug test.

16. Sets pay based on appropriate pay setting guidance, to include pay incentives, highest previous rate, etc.
17. Ensures proper appointing authorities are used to effect appointments.
18. In processes newly appointed employees, including providing benefits counseling.
19. Coordinates processing of personnel actions and ensures accurate employee and pay data is entered into the personnel and payroll systems.
20. Tracks recruitment actions to help ensure timely recruitment. Keeps management informed of progress of each recruitment throughout the process.
21. Maintains recruitment case files for third party review.
22. Ensures compliance with Federal hiring laws and regulations; and merit promotion and delegated examining policies and procedures.

C. Civilian Recruitment Team – Designs and implements marketing strategies based on specific management requests and/or difficult to fill occupations in consultation with HR Specialists and hiring officials. [Civilian Recruitment – Home \(sharepoint-mil.us\)](http://sharepoint-mil.us)

D. Applicant – Submits all required application materials in a complete, thorough, and timely manner as required by the specific vacancy announcement.

E. Selectee – Ensures all necessary pre-employment paperwork is submitted timely and accurately to avoid appointment delays.

CHAPTER 2. MAJOR PHASES IN THE HIRING PROCESS

There are seven major phases in the hiring process which are described in detail in Chapters 3 through 9. These phases are:

- A. Pre-Recruitment** – This phase involves all actions that occur prior to recruitment and is one of the most critical phases of the process. During this period, the hiring official meets with the HR Specialist to discuss the position classification, recruitment strategies, job analysis, assessment type, assessment criteria, and to determine whether Permanent Change of Station (PCS)/First Post payment or recruitment incentives will be offered. These pre-recruitment actions lay the foundation for all future actions that take place.
- B. Preparing the Job Opportunity Announcement** – This phase involves the development of the job opportunity announcement, assessment questions (for certain occupations/grade levels) used to evaluate the candidates, identification of specialized experience requirements, and any special selective factors.
- C. Job Opportunity Announcement Open Period** – This phase involves the applicants' responsibility for completing the application documentation requirements, submitting complete applications by the closing date of the job opportunity announcement, and taking any required assessments.
- D. Referral** – During this phase qualifications determinations and SME Review Panels are conducted, and the various types of referral lists and certificates are generated..
- E. Selection** – Once the referrals/certificates are issued, the hiring official is responsible for setting up and conducting interviews, checking references, etc. During this phase, the hiring official consults with the HR Specialist when questions arise, or additional information is required. After a selection is made, the hiring process shifts primarily back to the HR office and the selectee.
- F. Extend Tentative Job Offer** – This phase covers all actions involving the tentative job and preemployment requirements, including the security process drug testing, recruitment incentives requests, permanent change or first post of duty advisement, and establishing the selectee's reporting timeframe.
- G. Entrance on Duty** – This phase covers issuance of the final job offer, issuance of travel orders for permanent change in station or first post, employee's transit, and new employee in-processing.

CHAPTER 3. PRE-RECRUITMENT

The discussions and actions in the pre-recruitment phase are critical to ensuring a robust, diverse applicant pool. This chapter outlines the key considerations and discussion points between supervisors and Human Resources staff.

A. Strategic Conversation – The hiring official contacts the Human Resources (HR) Specialist (<http://www.uscg.mil/civilianHR/contact.asp>[Civilian HR Contacts](#)) to initiate a discussion about the recruitment action. Key decisions involving the classification of the position and the recruitment strategies used will be made during this phase. If at any time during the pre-recruitment phase selecting officials or managers may consider applying for a vacancy within their chain of command, they must immediately notify their HR Specialist and remove themselves from any aspect of addressing the vacancy to include: establishing the position, funding, classification, recruitment, or selection process. Subject matter experts who are interested in applying for the specific vacancy should also avoid participating in any phase of pre-recruitment and cannot participate in any recruitment or selection action.

1. **Position Classification** – The hiring official determines if the position description (PD) is still current or needs to be revised or rewritten. If the PD is accurately classified and the position is accurately reflected on PAL, the supervisor/manager should proceed directly to the recruitment phase.
2. If a position is newly established or if a PD revision is needed, the supervisor/manager should discuss the change with the HR Specialist to determine the reason for the change (i.e., an Organization Modification or PRR needed). When there are any changes in the office structure (e.g., realignment to new office), the supervisor submits an OMR to CG-8. For all new billets, management works with HR and CG-8 to ensure that the Personnel Allowance List (PAL) reflects accurate position information.
3. When the determination is made/completed the supervisor/manager must first use standard PDs provided in the PD Library. Use of available generic PDs are strongly encouraged. If the PD Library does not contain the series, title, and grade for an organization, the hiring official prepares the draft PD (including a newly completed Position Description Coversheet (OF-8)) and submits for classification to the HR Specialist in FedHR. . For more information on position classification refer to the USCG Managers Guide to Position Classification at [USCG Managers Guide to Position Classification](#).

It is important for an employee to have an accurate PD because it not only identifies the major duties and responsibilities of the position, it also outlines any special requirements or conditions of employment such as: financial disclosure, work schedule, security clearance, or other requirements. The PD serves as the foundation for recruitment, training, performance management, organizational design, etc. Although PDs outline the major duties of the position, performance plans are equally as important as PDs because they provide specific objectives and expectations for employees' performance.

B. Recruitment Strategies – There are various factors that are considered when discussing recruitment strategies. The discussion about recruitment strategies is a critical conversation between a supervisor and HR Specialist because it determines how applicants will be recruited and what incentives may be needed to entice applicants to accept Coast Guard job opportunities. The following are topics that must be discussed in this conversation.

1. A supervisor must assess whether creating entry level/career ladder positions starting at the GS-5 through GS-9 level (or entry level Federal Wage System positions) provide an avenue for long term workforce planning, especially in fields with high vacancy rates or recurring vacancies. Restructuring a position is one of the tools that can be used as long-term planning for the organization. Assessing the recruitment strategies for a position, including use of the Civilian Recruitment Team is essential to maximizing outreach to a variety of associations and organizations to obtain a broad applicant pool.
2. The supervisor should consult with the HR Specialist to discuss potential applicant pools. Unless positions have been historically difficult to fill, vacancies must be announced using Merit Promotion procedures first. If historically, merit promotion procedures do not provide a sufficient amount of quality applicants, then Delegated Examining Unit (DEU) procedures may be used. Supervisors and HR Specialists can also discuss if there are any existing certificates that can be leveraged.
3. The supervisor and HR Specialist must discuss if recruitment incentives are needed. Some incentives (i.e., recruitment incentives, student loan repayment, etc., must be included in the job opportunity announcement and are approved/disapproved prior to an employee's entrance on duty date. Permanent Change of Station (PCS)/First Post reimbursement (relocation expenses) must be approved by PSC-CPM-1 prior to recruitment and posting of the job opportunity announcement. Some positions are automatically approved for PCS because they are historically difficult-to-fill, but others require a written request from the supervisor. PCS should be discussed during the strategic conversation outlined in part A of this Chapter. PCS information can be found at [CI 12570.5A](#).

The following are requested by the selectee after a tentative job offer is made.

Approval must occur prior to an employee's entrance on duty date.

- a. Recruitment Incentive, COMDTINST 12500.2, Civilian Recruitment, Relocation, and Retention Incentives, [CI 12500.2](#).
- b. Relocation Incentive, COMDTINST 12500.2, Civilian Recruitment, Relocation, and Retention Incentives, [CI 12500.2](#).
- c. Superior Qualifications/Special Need Appointment, Civilian Recruitment, Relocation, and Retention Incentives, [CI 12500.2](#).

- d. Enhanced Annual Leave Accrual, COMDTINST 12630.2, Credit for Prior Civilian Experience and Active Duty Uniformed Service Not Otherwise Creditable in Determining Enhanced Rates of Annual Leave Accrual, [CI 12630.2](#).
 - e. Student Loan Repayment, COMDTINST 12500.3A, Student Loan Repayment Program, [CI 12500.3A](#).
4. The supervisor should consider special recruiting authorities which may provide referrals faster and easier than the traditional job opportunity announcement process or that may improve entry level hiring and establish a pipeline of applicants for other Coast Guard positions.
- a. Schedule A (People with Disabilities) – Through a Coast Guard partnership with the Department of Transportation Disability Resource Center (DOTDRC), assistance is available for reasonable accommodations necessary for successful job performance when employing people with disabilities. In addition, the HR Selective Placement Program Coordinator (SPPC) is available to provide assistance to management and/or the servicing HR Specialist with recruitment and hiring.
 - b. Veterans Appointing Authorities which includes disabled veterans, e.g., Veterans Recruitment Appointment (VRA), and 30% or more Disabled Veterans. Information can be found at this link: [Feds Hire Vets](#).
 - c. The Pathways Programs are streamlined developmental programs tailored to promote employment opportunities for students and recent graduates in the Federal workforce. These Programs aim to improve recruiting efforts, offer clear paths to Federal internships for students from high school through post-graduate school and to careers for recent graduates, and to provide meaningful training and career development opportunities for individuals who are at the beginning of their Federal service. Additional information can be found at this link: [Students and Recent Graduates](#).

C. CIVILIAN RECRUITMENT TEAM. The Civilian Recruitment Team plays a critical role in the recruitment process and the recruitment strategy discussion. They market the Coast Guard as an “Employer of Choice” by building broad public awareness of the Coast Guard and civilian job opportunities. HR Specialists and the supervisors should consult the Team to:

- 1. Market student and entry level job opportunities at universities.
- 2. Advertise job opportunities and conduct resume mining on USAJOBS Agency Talent Portal and LinkedIn.
- 3. Gain information on upcoming recruiting events that may be helpful in advertising a position.
- 4. Market the Coast Guard as an by building a broad public awareness and positive image of the Coast Guard civilian workforce.

5. Design outreach plans and implements marketing strategies for positions/occupations in consultation with HR Specialists and hiring officials.
6. Conduct strategic recruitment discussions with hiring officials in preparation for interviews and the issuance of tentative job offers for DHA/EHA announcements at recruiting events.
7. Identify and attend recruiting events to share information on Coast Guard civilian opportunities and garner interest in the Coast Guard. The current Recruiting Calendar can be found at this link: [Civilian Recruitment – Home \(sharepoint-mil.us\)](#).
8. Facilitate interviews and tentative job offers at recruitment events in accordance with Coast Guard Direct Hire and Expedited Hire Authority. The DHA Fact Sheet & FAQs can be found here: [Direct Hire Authority FAQs](#)

CHAPTER 4 – PREPARING THE JOB OPPORTUNITY ANNOUNCEMENT

This chapter addresses submissions of recruitment requests, the importance of job analyses, and preparation of job opportunity announcements.

- A. Request for Personnel Action.** When the pre-recruitment phase is complete, the supervisor is prepared to submit a complete recruitment request through USAS. Complete recruitment requests include, the SF-52, Request for Personnel Action; OF-8, Position Description Coversheet, classified PD, Position Designation Record; and Recruitment Action Checklist ([RAC](#)). When a complete recruitment request is submitted, the Coast Guard Notional Hiring Timeline (80 days) begins.
- B. Job Analysis.** The supervisor and HR Specialist work together in creating the job analysis. The job analysis is a critical step in the development of specialized experience outlined on the JOA and for use in various assessment tools. A correct job analysis relies on an accurate position description. The job analysis determines the critical description of specialized experience, drives the questions asked in the assessment questionnaire, drives the experience descriptions provided for use by SME's in the SME Review Panel, and determines and justifies use of selective placement factors which are subsequently outlined in the job opportunity announcement.
- C. Determination of Descriptive Functional Job Title.** The supervisor and HR Specialist will jointly determine a descriptive functional title that will be used on the job announcement. The descriptive title must have a nexus to the job being filled and is intended to improve clarity and understandability for job seekers and convey the true nature of the work. It is intended to align federal job announcements with private sector terminology to attract a broader talent pool. If the classified position title provides sufficient clarity, a separate function title is not needed.
- D. Determination of Applicant Cap.** Job opportunity announcements that require the use of an SME Review Panel will have an applicant cap of 100 applicants (Firefighter positions are excluded). When using any other type of assessment, supervisors and HR Specialists should discuss the use of an applicant cap and determine if it is appropriate to use for the specific position. Things to consider include, the number of highly qualified candidates on previous certificates of eligibles, the size of the applicant pool, the desirability of the duty location, etc. If an applicant cap is used, it will be set at 100 applicants and stated in the job opportunity announcement. Applicants may apply for job opportunity announcements with an applicant cap until midnight on the day the 100th application is submitted. After midnight on that day, no further applications will be accepted in USAStaffing.
- E. Assessment Types.** Most job opportunity announcements require the use of an applicant assessment. Exceptions include, positions covered under Direct Hire, Expediting Hiring, or Title 50, and Coast Guard Academy Faculty (AD) and Administrative Law Judge positions.

The type of assessment is determined by pay plan, series, and grade. The following are the current types of assessments:

- a. Applicant Questionnaire. The applicant questionnaire is used for Federal Wage Service (FWS) and GS1-4 positions. The assessment varies based on the positions and questions are derived from the position description. The HR Specialist in cooperation with the hiring official or subject matter expert (SME) may select from existing questions or develop new questions. The HR Specialist uses the applicant's responses to the questions to assess and measure the applicant's knowledge and skills for the position.
 - b. USAHire. Numerous series and grades are currently covered by the competency-based assessments in USAHire. Selecting officials can determine if a USAHire assessment is available at [Available Series & Grades - Standard Assessments – Agency Resource Center](#). Selecting officials can find the competencies that are assessed at [Competency Lookup Tool – Agency Resource Center](#). The assessments are already created and cannot be changed. Assessments differ by series and measure general competencies. Level of technical knowledge and competence is determined through interviews.
 - c. Subject Matter Expert Resume Review Panel. For positions not covered by an assessment outlined in E.a. or Eb. or otherwise excluded, the required assessment is a SME Resume Review Panel. SME panels are composed of employees at or above the grade level of the position who are highly knowledgeable regarding the tasks and competencies of the announced position. SME experts must have been in their current grade and position for a minimum of six months; be available to participate in required training; and cannot be the selecting official, an applicant for the position for which they are serving as an SME, a contractor, or related to an applicant for the position.
- F. Selective Factor.** Some positions warrant use of a selective factor which serves as a “screen out.” For example, a position may have a special requirement, e.g., fluency in a foreign language. If an applicant does not meet a selective factor, he/she is ineligible for further consideration. Therefore, the factor becomes a part of the minimum requirements for the position. Selective factors are derived from the position description.
- G. Conditions of Employment.** Some positions require special conditions of employment due to unique characteristics of the duties and/or work environment. These conditions must be identified in the position description and job opportunity announcement. More common examples include drug testing requirements, pre-employment physicals, frequent travel, shift work, or working in industrial settings.
- H. Job Opportunity Announcements.**
1. The title, series, and grade may drive the type of job opportunity announcement that is used due to specific government-wide or Coast Guard authorities.
 2. Most Coast Guard positions are announced using Merit Promotion and/or Delegated Examining Unit (DEU) authorities and procedures.

- a. Positions that are not historically difficult to fill must be advertised using Merit Promotion procedures first.
 - b. Positions that are historically difficult to fill may be advertised under Merit Promotion Plan and Delegated Examining Unit (DEU) procedures.
 - c. Merit Promotion announcements provide an opportunity for internal federal employees, transferees, reinstatement eligible, and special appointment candidates, e.g., Veterans Employment Opportunities Act (VEOA).
 - d. DEU authority is primarily used to fill competitive jobs with applicants from outside the Federal workforce.
3. Certain occupations are covered by government-wide Direct Hire Authority or Coast Guard Expedited Hiring Authority. In these instances, job opportunity announcements are used, but the procedures for referral (outlined in Chapter 5) are different. Information about positions covered by Direct Hire or Expedited Hiring can be found at [Direct Hire FACT Sheet July 2023.pdf \(uscg.mil\)](#).
 4. Job opportunity announcements are also used for Coast Guard Academy Faculty positions, but due to the specific hiring authority, the job opportunity announcements are not posted on USAJOBS, but rather are posted on university websites or other higher education websites.
 5. Except as provided in paragraph 4, the minimum open period for job opportunity announcements is 10 calendar days. Selecting officials and HR Specialists should discuss any requests for opening periods that are less or greater than 10 days.. Job opportunity announcements should not open or close on a non-business day. The vacancy announcements will be posted on the USAJOBS website at [USAJOBS](#).
- I. Special Recruiting.** As necessary, the Civilian Recruitment Team may conduct special national/regional outreach or marketing to organizations not typically contacted. Activities may include recruiting events and/or advertisements in publications or other media.

CHAPTER 5: JOB OPPORUTNITY OPEN PERIOD

This chapter addresses actions taken during the job opportunity announcement open period.

- A. Establishing the Open Period.** Job opportunity announcements must be open for a minimum of five workdays. However, they are often open for a period of at least ten - calendar days. The open period is dependent on a variety of factors, including past recruitment success, whether the position is difficult-to-fill, available applicant pools, etc.
- B. Applicants' Responsibilities.** During the open period, applicants identify the vacancy on USAJOBS and update their resumes. In addition to resumes, applicants must often gather and submit additional documents such as unofficial copies of transcripts, DD-214s or other proof of veterans' preference, proof of priority placement consideration, proof of current or previous Federal service, etc. Applicants must also respond to any applicable assessment. Required documents are outlined in the job opportunity announcement. The resume, pertinent documents, and assessment completion constitute the full application package. Applicants who do not submit the required documents by the closing date or timeframe provided for the USAHire assessment for the job opportunity announcement are not considered for the position.

When a USAHire assessment is used, the applicants will receive an email invitation and will have up to 48 hours after the closing date of the job announcement to complete the assessment. The assessments are divided into sections and applicants may take breaks in between the different parts. However, once they start a section, they must complete that section. Once an applicant takes a portion of an assessment, that assessment is good for one year. When applying to other jobs there could be different associated assessments for that series. In this case, the applicant is invited to take the portion not previously completed. After a year has passed, an applicant will have to retake any portion applicable to his/her application when applying for a new job.

- C. Responding to Applicants' Inquiries.** HR Specialists often respond to applicants' inquiries during the open period to address questions about required documents or applicant procedures. However, unless there is an automated system failure, they are unable to submit documents after the closing date. It is incumbent upon applicants to give themselves adequate time to gather the required documents and submit the complete application package by the closing date of the job opportunity announcement.
- D. Extending the Closing Date.** During the opening period, HR Specialists can monitor the number of applications received for the position. It is important for HR Specialists and Hiring Officials to be aware of the number of applications received shortly before the closing date to determine if the closing date of the job opportunity announcement should be extended to allow additional time for the receipt of applications.

CHAPTER 6. REFERRAL

This chapter provides information on determining qualifications of applicants who applied for the position and the different types of referral lists/certificates of eligibles that are provided to selecting officials.

- A. Qualifications Determination** – The HR Specialist uses the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) qualifications standards and the position description of record to determine the basic qualifications of each applicant including any selective factors. The assessments are also used to determine best or highly qualified candidates for referral. Applicants are referred for consideration as outlined below.
- B. Referral Lists/Certificates** – Referral lists/certificates are issued for a period of 30 calendar days. Requests for extensions may be made for 15 calendar days for a maximum of **45 calendar days**. An extension request requires a written request from the supervisor to the HR Specialist which is maintained in the case file. Referral lists/certificates expire after 45 days and if a selection has not been made within 45 days, a new vacancy announcement must be issued. However, certain rules apply to the timeframe in which vacancies may be reannounced and the supervisor should discuss this with his/her HR Specialist.
1. **Merit Promotion** – This list is used for the consideration of current and former Federal employees and special appointment candidates, e.g., VEOA, Military Spouse appointing authority. Merit selection rules specify that only the best qualified applicants are to be referred for selection consideration. Selections may be made from this referral without considering veterans status.
 2. **Non-competitive** – This list is used for candidates who do not have to compete for placement in the position to include, those eligible under the Veterans’ Readjustment Act, Disabled Veterans of 30% or more, or current/prior federal employee who competed for or held a permanent position at the same or higher grade level as the full performance level of the vacant position. Veterans’ preference is not considered when selecting from a non-competitive list except for eligible referred under the Veterans’ Readjustment Act. This certificate is issued along with a Merit Promotion Certificate.
 3. **Delegated Examining Unit (DEU)/Open Competitive** – The DEU list is used when jobs are announced to the public at large. DEU referrals are made under Category Rating procedures. Applicants who meet the basic minimum qualification requirements established for the position and whose job-related competencies or KSAs have been assessed are ranked by being placed in one of the pre-defined quality categories (Best Qualified, Well Qualified, or Qualified) instead of being ranked in numeric score order. Veterans’ preference must be considered when selections are made from DEU.
 - a. **Veterans’ Preference** – Recognizing veterans’ sacrifice and the possible economic loss suffered by those who served their country while in uniform, Congress enacted laws to prevent veterans seeking Federal employment from being

penalized for their time in military service. The laws are intended to restore veterans to a favorable competitive position for Federal employment.

Veterans' preference comes from the Veterans' Preference Act of 1944, as amended, and is now in various provisions of Title 5, United States Code. By law, veterans who are disabled or who served on active duty in the Armed Forces during certain specified time periods or in military campaigns are entitled to preference over others when hiring from Delegated Examining Unit (DEU)/open competitive lists of eligible and in retention during a reduction in force. Preference may also be applicable when filling excepted service positions which are positions excepted from the competitive service by law or by OPM.

- b. Category rating applies only to DEU certificates in which names of all eligible candidates in the highest quality category are referred on the Certificate of Eligibles to the hiring official for consideration. Hiring officials select from among the eligible candidates in the highest quality category. Preference eligible are listed ahead of non-preference eligible within each quality category and must be selected before any non-preference eligibles in the category. Detailed information on category rating can be found in the [Delegated Examining Operations Handbook](#).
4. Direct Hire and Expedited Hiring – Under Direct Hire and Expedited Hiring, all applicants who apply for the position are referred to management for consideration. Once a candidate is identified, a name request is submitted, and the certificate is issued to the selecting official.
5. Details about various Veterans Appointing Authorities are provided below to aid in understanding the types of authorities and when they may be used. More information can be found at: [Feds Hire Vets](#)
 - a. 30% or More Compensable Disabled Veterans – Job opportunity announcements may be used but are not required. The authority may be used to hire 30% or more compensable disabled veterans at any grade level. Applicants are referred on the non-competitive referral list.
 - b. Veterans Recruitment Appointment (VRA) – may be used for vacancies up to the GS-11 grade level. Job opportunity announcement may be used but are not required. Applicants are referred on the non-competitive referral list in a separate category.
 - c. Veterans Employment Opportunities Act (VEOA) – Under the VEOA appointment, the veteran competes with current or former employees under merit promotion procedures. Veterans' preference does not apply when considering veterans under merit promotion. There is no priority consideration for veterans and veterans' preference points are not used when determining the best-qualified candidates.
6. Schedule A (People with Disability Appointing Authority) – In addition to using this authority to fill time limited or continuing positions with disabled individuals, this

authority can be used to meet summer or permanent hiring needs with talented college students with disabilities. The Workforce Recruitment Program (WRP) database contains profiles of student job candidates from more than 200 colleges and universities nationwide, representing all majors, and ranging from college freshmen to graduate students and law students. The HR Selective Placement Program Coordinator working in the civilian recruiting team can assist with this referral as well as provide resources for accommodations.

7. Military Spouse Appointing Authority (EO 13473) – This is an authority that may be used to appoint military spouses to temporary, term or permanent positions. To be considered under this authority, applicants must apply to a public notice announcement. There is no requirement to be among the best-qualified candidates to be referred. **Note: If the applicant applies to a DEU announcement only, the applicant will be considered under competitive procedures not the military spouse appointing authority.** Eligibility for this authority applies to the following individuals.
 - a. Spouse of member of the armed forces serving on active duty who has orders specifying a PCS (not for training). The appointment must be made within two years of the PCS.
 - b. Spouse of a 100% disabled service member injured while on active duty.
 - c. Un-remarried widow or widower of a service member killed while performing active duty.
8. Pathways Programs enable hiring of Interns, Interns Not-to-Exceed, Recent Graduates and Presidential Management Fellows. Job opportunity announcements are required to hire Interns and Recent Graduates and veterans' preference applies.

CHAPTER 7. SELECTION

- A. Selecting the Best Candidate** – The importance of selecting the best candidate for a position cannot be overemphasized. Multiple factors are needed to properly evaluate qualified candidates. These factors must be “job related” and defensible under third party reviews, e.g., Merit Systems Protection Board. Consideration should be given to work experience, education and training, performance appraisals, and awards. In the interview, the candidate may expand upon information provided in the application/resume and provide management with the deciding factor in the selection process.
- B. Merit System Principles and Prohibited Personnel Practices** – Supervisors and hiring officials must abide by the Merit System Principles, avoid Prohibited Personnel Practices and understand the legal consequences for non-compliance. The Merit System Principles and Prohibited Personnel Practices can be reviewed at [U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board | Merit System Principles \(mspb.gov\)](https://www.mspb.gov) and [Prohibited Personnel Practices Overview \(osc.gov\)](https://www.osc.gov). This information provides the framework for ensuring that federal employees are hired, managed, trained, and rewarded based on merit factors. Supervisors who commit a prohibited personnel practice may be subject to disciplinary action.
- C. Restrictions on the Employment of Relatives and Advocating for the Employment of Relatives** – Commandant Instruction [CI 12310.3C](#) broadly prohibits any public official from advocating for the employment of a relative to any position within an agency in which they serve, exercise jurisdiction over, or perform a supervisory or oversight role. Likewise, subject matter experts who have a relative who may apply for a position should not participate on interview panels. It is important for supervisors to familiarize themselves with this instruction. Disciplinary actions, up to and including removal, may be taken against public officials who violate Federal regulations and Coast Guard policies, that prohibit the appointment of or advocacy for the advancement of relatives.
- D. Reviewing Resumes** – The first and most important factor for a hiring official to consider is the applicants’ possession of critical skills, competencies, knowledge and specific experience related to the position. Notes should be made of other unique knowledge or skills that may enhance job performance and may set the applicant apart from the others. The resumes may be reviewed for awards and current performance ratings, which can be factors when assessing candidates. Education, training, professional licenses, and certificate information should also be considered as they relate to the duties of the position.
- E. Interviewing** – Interviews are strongly encouraged and may be required by Command Instructions. Interviews are an opportunity to gather additional information from the applicants since the resumes are only brief descriptions of the individual’s background. Interviews can be especially useful in evaluating such skills as oral communication and interpersonal skills that are not otherwise easily measured in writing. They provide candidates the opportunity to market or expand upon their education, experience, etc., and management the opportunity to provide additional information about the position and the organization. Care should be taken to ensure consistency in questioning and documentation of interview question responses. Taking notes is helpful in further

selection decision discussions but are also needed if a recruitment case goes before a third party. Supervisors are required to keep all interview notes.

Second level interviews may be useful and are most often done for higher level or supervisory positions within an organization. Much like first level interviews, they can provide further insight into the experience and expertise of top candidates. Care should be taken by first level interview panels to document how referrals of candidates for second level interviews are determined. Second level interview panels should take notes and document their rationale in determining the selected candidate.

The information in this guide including the detailed guidance in Appendix C, will provide supervisors with information and recommendations, which, if followed, will result in valid and effective interviews. For additional information and assistance, a supervisor should contact the servicing HR Specialist.

- F. Checking References** – After reviewing the resume and conducting an interview, the hiring official should have a clear indication of the top applicant(s) for further selection consideration. The next step is to check references, which preferably should be verified using prior supervisors over personal references since these individuals have knowledge of the candidate’s work performance. **The current supervisor should only be contacted if the candidate has given permission.** During the interview process, each candidate should be informed that references and/or current and previous supervisors will be contacted. Guidance on checking references can be found in Appendix E.
- G. Record Retention** – Supervisors are required to maintain interview notes and reference check notes for three years. If there are disputes regarding the selection process, the records should be kept until the Coast Guard is notified by agency counsel that all pending disputes have been resolved, all litigation concluded, and any applicable periods for seeking further review have elapsed, and in any event, for a minimum of six years from the date the facts giving rise to the dispute occurred.
- H. Make Selection and Return Referral Lists/Certificates** – The hiring official should notify the HR Specialist immediately after a selection is made. **The hiring official cannot make a job offer or discuss salary. All job offers are made by the Civilian Personnel Management Division** because pre-employment requirements (e.g., employment suitability, drug-testing, security, education verification) must be reviewed prior to a final job offer.
- I. Non-Selection Notifications** – The non-selected candidates will be notified in writing by the Civilian HR Directorate upon closeout of the case file. (The notification is sent electronically from the hiring system.) When there are internal candidates, the hiring official may wish to employ the best practice of providing personal notification of non-selection directly before an announcement of the selection is made within the unit.
- J. Non-Selection from Certificates** – If the hiring official is unable to select a highly qualified candidate from the referral lists/certificates, the referrals may be returned unused. The hiring official should contact the HR Specialist to request options for re-advertisement or use of an alternate recruitment strategy.

CHAPTER 8. EXTEND TENTATIVE JOB OFFER

This chapter discusses the tentative offer and preemployment requirements that must be completed before issuing a final offer of employment with the Coast Guard.

- A. Tentative Job Offer** – After receiving the selection notification, the HR Specialist will speak to the hiring official about information relevant to the tentative offer (i.e., preemployment requirements). The HR Specialist will contact the applicant to complete the Declaration for Federal Employment, OF-306 and review it for any potential concerns that may need to be addressed. Upon adjudication of the form, the HR Specialist will prepare and issue a tentative job offer letter explaining the conditions of the tentative offer. **Note: Official job offers can only be made by the Civilian Personnel Management Division.**
- B. Preemployment Requirements.** If the tentative offer is accepted, the HR Specialist will begin any preemployment requirements, including the security process, drug testing, pre-appointment physical, permanent change in station advisement, recruitment incentives requests, etc., as appropriate. The preemployment requirements must be completed before a final offer of employment can be made.

If the applicant declines an initial offer, as appropriate, the hiring official may prepare a request for incentive(s) such as superior qualifications/special need appointments, relocation and recruitment incentives, enhanced annual leave, etc. Approval by the Civilian HR Directorate must be obtained prior to the employee's appointment. Information about recruitment incentives can be found in COMDTINST 12500.2, Civilian Recruitment, Relocation, and Retention Incentives, [CI 12500.2](#), COMDTINST 12630.2, Credit for Prior Civilian Experience and Active Duty Uniformed Service Not Otherwise Creditable in Determining Enhanced Rates of Annual Leave Accrual, [CI 12630.2](#) and Student Loan Repayment, COMDTINST 12500.3, Student Loan Repayment Program, [CI 12500.3A](#).

Chapter 9 - Entrance on Duty (EOD)

This chapter outlines what occurs after preemployment requirements are met and the employee's entrance on duty.

- A. Official Job Offer** – Upon satisfactory completion of all preemployment requirements, the HR Specialist makes an official offer to the selectee. The offer includes information about the salary and working conditions. If the selectee accepts the offer, the HR Specialist consults with the supervisor to discuss potential entrance on duty (EOD) dates, and negotiates the EOD date with the selectee and/or the selectee's HR office if the individual is a current Federal employee. The HR Specialist will also issue a written offer of employment.
- B. Permanent Change in Station/First Post Moves** – Upon receipt of an official offer of employment, if the employee is provided PCS or First Post entitlements, he/she is issued travel orders and may commence travel to the new duty station.
- C. In-Processing** – The new employee is provided a link to the USAS system to complete in-processing documents, to include forms for Federal and state income taxes, direct deposit, health and life insurance benefits, etc. The employee also attends an in-person or virtual on boarding conducted by an HR representative. The individual is administered the oath of office and learns more about the Coast Guard.
- D. Supervisor's Role**
 1. Prior to the employee's entrance on duty the supervisor should identify and prepare the employee's workspace and ensure equipment is in place.
 2. Once the employee is on-board with the Coast Guard, in addition to assisting the employee with understanding his/her new position, key points of contact, internal operating procedures, etc., the supervisor must ensure completion of performance standards and required training.
 - a. Supervisory and Employee responsibilities are provide at [New Employee-Supervisor Checklist-2023.pdf](#)
 - b. Complete and submit a request to establish a new Work Station Account to CGFIXIT ([Coast Guard Employee Center Homepage - Employee Center](#)) a few days before EOD. Submission can speed up the time frame to access the CG IT systems.

USA Staffing Overview

1. USA Staffing (USAS) is the Office of Personnel Management's end-to-end talent acquisition system for Federal agencies. This system automates the hiring process and supports Hiring Managers and Human Resource Specialists in acquiring, assessing, certifying, selecting, and onboarding qualified candidates. The system supports online documents and forms completion, digital signature, routing, and notification.

System Highlights

USAS is specifically designed for federal hiring, providing tools and features tailored to our unique needs, including:

- A dashboard for users to review initiated recruitment actions.
- A complete recruitment request package (Request for Personnel Action form SF-52, Classified Position Description (PD), and Recruitment Action Checklist (RAC)) maintained in USAS.
- Ability for Hiring Managers to review and edit Job Opportunity Announcements (JOA) including assessment criteria and return the edits back to the servicing HR Specialists without transitioning between multiple systems.
- Integration with the Electronic Official Personnel Folder (eOPF) to enable documents to transfer electronically from USA Staffing to employees' official personnel folders.

2. **Human Resources Specialists:** USAS provides a platform to research, track, and manage customer inquiries. The dashboard style functions, and embedded reports facilitate workload management including volume and timeliness of work.
3. **Supervisors:** USAS provides tools to manage and track Recruitment Requests. Supervisors will initiate, upload supporting documents, and submit Recruitment requests directly within USAS then reassign the case to the servicing HR Specialist for processing.
4. **Subject Matter Experts (SMEs):** In some cases, a SME Review Panel is required to determine the certificate of eligibles. USAS provides the applicant information and assessment materials to facilitate SME Review Panels and to enable final determinations of candidates for referral on certificates of eligibles.
5. **Classification and Recruitment Actions:** All Classified Position Descriptions and Recruitment actions will be entered into USAS.

INTERVIEW GUIDE

The hiring official and/or panel may interview one, some, or none of the referred eligible unless a Command Instruction provides additional interview requirements. It is recommended that selection/interview panels be established to explore qualifications and to ensure consistent treatment of all eligibles. This may include using panel members with diverse perspectives or who represent different career fields or other commands/activities. Although not required, the panel should be made up of individuals of the same or higher grade (or equivalent) as the position being filled. The panel reviews all candidate packages forwarded by the HR Specialist and recommends the most highly qualified candidates for interviews. Prior to reviewing the candidates' packages, the panel members will establish the ranking criteria to be used. The criteria including any weighting should be tailored to the vacancy.

The panel members may work independently, or as a group, to review the resumes and subsequently work as a group to compile the final list of candidates to be interviewed. The number of candidates recommended for interview is at the discretion of the panel and/or hiring official but should be sufficient to provide an ample number of candidates from which to make an informed decision and hire the best qualified candidate. The hiring official reviews the final interview list and makes the final determination on the interview list. The hiring official may review non-recommended applicants for potential inclusion in the final interview list. The panel may interview the candidates and make recommendations to the hiring official, or the interviews may be conducted by the hiring official.

In addition to the information in this Guide, information about interviewing can be found at the following links:

OPM Training – How to Conduct a Successful Interview: [Hiring Manager Interview \(opm.gov\)](https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/training/how-to-conduct-a-successful-interview/)

OPM Guidance – Hiring Managers: 3 Steps to a Successful Interview: [Interview Tips for Hiring Managers \(opm.gov\)](https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/guidance/hiring-managers-3-steps-to-a-successful-interview/)

Schedule and conduct interviews

If an interview panel is used, the panel chair coordinates the members' schedules to determine a suitable time to conduct interviews; ensures the eligibles are notified of their interview time; and has overall responsibility for the development of interview questions and rating sheets.

Interviewing Techniques

Interview questions should always elicit job-related information relative to the requirements of the position for which the candidate is applying. Questions should be prepared in advance to ensure that all candidates are treated in the same manner. Generally, the same questions should be asked of each candidate. However, follow-up questions may be used to obtain

additional or clarifying information to assess an individual's specific qualifications for the position.

All applicants should be allotted the same amount of time for the interview, with time allowed for the applicant to ask questions of the interviewer(s).

At the discretion of the hiring official, a second round of interviews may be conducted with a smaller number of candidates.

It is a good idea to record notes to eliminate the need to recall key points from memory. It is also helpful to note the date, time, place, and length of the interview. A copy of the interview questions and the name of individual(s) who conducted the interview should be on file. Notes are also critical in enabling hiring officials and/or interview panel members to reconstruct the selection process if the hiring action is subject to a third-party review. Supervisors are required to maintain interview notes and reference check notes for two years. If there are disputes regarding the selection process, the records should be kept until the Coast Guard is notified by agency counsel that all pending disputes have been resolved, all litigation concluded, and any applicable periods for seeking further review have elapsed, and in any event, for a minimum of six years from the date the facts giving rise to the dispute occurred.

Preparing for Interviews

It is important for a good interviewer to be prepared. In preparation for the interview, each panel member should become familiar with the candidate's application and supplemental materials. This preparation ensures the interviewer has the requisite information, before conducting the interview, to properly evaluate each candidate's qualifications. To prepare for the interviews:

1. Arrange for an appropriate interview site, which is comfortable, well lit, and private (with no interruptions).
2. Carefully review the position description and qualification requirements to identify critical "job related" factors.
3. Allocate sufficient time for each interview.
4. Select/develop interview questions that are related to the position and "job related" factors. Recommended types of questions are those which:
 - Elicit information on experience and training related to on-the-job performance.
 - Ask candidates how they would respond to hypothetical situations likely to be encountered on the job.

Recommended Steps

In conducting your interviews, it is recommended that you follow these five sequential steps:

1. Introduction and Welcome – Establish rapport with the applicant and explain the purpose of the interview.

2. Discuss the Position – Provide full information about the duties and responsibilities of the position including possible travel or overtime requirements. Outline any long-term expectations, e.g., future transfer to another duty location after completion of training. If the selection is handled by an official or panel which is geographically separated from the duty location of the position, management should coordinate with the local unit to ensure potential hires understand the unique aspects of the position and of the geographic location.
3. Obtain Relevant Information – Use your job-related questions.
4. Respond to the Applicant’s Questions.
5. End the Interview – Express appreciation to the applicant for his/her time and inform the applicant of when the selection will be made and how the applicant will be notified of the decision.

NOTE: If an applicant requests a reasonable accommodation for the interview (i.e., interpreter), hiring officials should contact their local Civil Rights provider.

Interview Do’s - DO! Ask questions relating to applicants:

1. Qualifications
2. Experience
3. Education
4. Job-related activities
5. Career goals and objectives
6. Plans for further self-development
7. Availability for travel, overtime, specific work schedules

Interview Don’ts – DON’T! Ask illegal questions for example (Note - only ask questions related to the job or work involved):

1. Age
 - What are your retirement plans?
 - Do you think you are too old to accept an entry level position?
2. Children/childcare
 - How many children do you have? Are they healthy?
 - Do you have a childcare problem?
 - What are your family plans?
3. Marital status
 - Is your spouse subject to transfer anytime?
 - Are you married? What does your husband/spouse do?
 - How long do you expect your spouse to be stationed here?
4. Political affiliation
 - Who did you vote for in the last election?
5. Race or national origin
 - Are you, your spouse, or parents naturalized native born US citizens?
 - What date did you acquire citizenship?
 - What is your nationality, lineage, national origin or descent?
 - What date did you arrive in the US?
 - What port of entry?

- How long have you been a resident?
 - What languages do you commonly use?
6. Religion – You may not ask anything about religion
 7. Other Areas - Any other area which is not specifically related to the evaluation criteria for the position.

Interview Pitfalls

1. While the interview can be a helpful tool in the selection process, its limitations should be recognized. In the “artificial” interview setting, it is difficult to discern such important performance traits as reliability, problem solving capability, learning potential, work performance aptitude, work habits, judgment, and motivation. These traits are more accurately assessed through review of materials contained in the selection package such as performance ratings, applicant training and awards, supervisory appraisals, etc. While the interview can serve to clarify and elicit further job-related information, it should be used as only one part of a comprehensive evaluation process.

2. An interview can inadvertently be the source of numerous illegal violations. For an interview to be defensible, it must be properly developed and conducted, passing the test of: (1) being specifically job-related and (2) filling a true business need. A casual, unplanned, unsystematic interview can lead to such common interviewing errors such as:
 - Failure to establish rapport with the candidate. The interview never gets off the ground - resulting in no substantive discussion about the applicant and his/her qualifications.
 - Failure to have a strategy. Lack of an interview system or an understanding of what information needs to be elicited can lead to an inappropriate and counterproductive interview – perhaps resulting in the inadvertent violation of EEO regulations.
 - Briefness of interview. An interview that is too brief is usually superficial, yielding little valuable information about the candidate.
 - Overemphasis on initial impression. First impressions are not necessarily true indications of typical behavior. Avoid making final decisions early in the interview before you have gathered appropriate information.
 - Unconscious biases of preferences. Don’t allow one specific trait or characteristic to influence your overall evaluation of a candidate. Common areas of unconscious bias include sex, age, race, physical handicap, and physical characteristics (weight, height, etc.).
 - Excessive talking. When the interviewer does most of the talking, little can be learned about the applicant.
 - Reliance on intuition. Conclusions based on intuition are irrational and invalid. Only a complete understanding of what an applicant has done in the past will help to predict what he or she will do in the future.

Appendix C

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS DO'S & DONT'S

Guidelines: Lawful and Unlawful Interview Questions

Subject of Question:	It is ACCEPTABLE to inquire about:	It is UNACCEPTABLE to inquire about:
Name	Whether applicant has ever worked under a different name	The original name of an applicant whose name has been legally changed. The ethnic association of applicant's name Applicant's maiden name
Age	If applicant is older than 18 If applicant is younger than 18 or 21 if job related	Date of birth Date of high school or college graduation
Residence	Applicant's place of residence Alternate contact information	Previous addresses Birthplace of applicant or applicant's parents Length of current and previous addresses
Race or color	-	Applicant's race or color of skin
National origin and ancestry	-	Applicant's lineage, ancestry, national origin, parentage or nationality Nationality of applicant's parents or spouse Applicant's maiden name
Gender and family composition	-	Sex of applicant Marital status Dependents of applicant or child-care arrangements Who to contact in case of emergency
Creed or religion	-	Applicant's religious affiliation What church, parish, mosque or synagogue applicant belongs What holidays applicant observes
Citizenship	Whether the applicant is a U.S. citizen or has current permit/visa to work in U.S.	Whether applicant is a citizen of a country other than the United States Date of U.S. citizenship
Language	What language applicant speaks and/or writes fluently, IF JOB RELATED	Applicant's native language Language commonly used at home
Arrest record and convictions	If applicant has ever been convicted of a crime	Whether applicant has ever been arrested

Reference checking	Previous work contacts	Name of applicant's religious leader Applicant's political affiliation and contacts
Relatives	Names of relatives already employed by employer	Name and/or address of any relative of applicant Whom to contact in case of emergency
Organizations	Applicant's membership in any professional, service or trade organization that are relevant to his/her ability to perform the job	List of all clubs or social organizations to which applicant belongs
Photographs	-	Photograph with application, with résumé, or before hiring
Physical characteristics	-	Any inquiry into height and weight of applicant
Physical limitations or disabilities	Whether applicant can perform the duties of the job for which he or she is applying	The nature or severity of an illness or physical condition Whether applicant has ever filed workers' compensation claim
Military reserve status	Only if related to the position being filled, e.g., key position	Use status as a consideration for employment
Family medical history	-	Any inquiry related to family members' medical history

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Questions for Better Interviews – Since the interview is specifically designed to gather information upon which to evaluate essentially similar candidates, the major areas covered should be uniform among candidates. The easiest and most consistent means for gathering the information needed for evaluating candidates is to develop certain basic questions that will be asked of all those interviewed. Interview questions should include the following type of questions, as applicable:

1. All-purpose interview questions
2. Interview questions for supervisory positions
3. Interview questions for technical positions
4. Interview questions for clerical, secretarial, and assistant positions
5. Interview questions for trades and labor occupations

All Purpose Interview Questions (Examples)

1. Tell me about your present job.
 - What do you like best about it?
 - What do you like least?
 - What frustrates you?
 - What have you learned on this job?
 - Where do you rank your present job with other jobs you've held? Why?
2. How have you changed the content of your job from when you first assumed it (e.g., expanded its scope, improved its contribution to the organization, etc.)?
3. What are some of the things in a job that are important to you?
4. In general, what type of work have you enjoyed the most? The least? Why?
5. Within a work environment, what are your strengths? Your weakness?
6. For what things have your superiors complimented you?
7. What are some problems you encountered on the job? How did you solve these problems?
8. What are some of your more important accomplishments?
 - What are the reasons you were successful in achieving these accomplishments?
 - Were there any unusual difficulties you had to overcome to achieve these accomplishments?
9. What are some important decisions or recommendations you were called upon to make?
 - What decisions are easiest for you to make? Which are more difficult?
 - How has your previous work experience helped you to improve your decision-making abilities?
 - Cite an important decision that you would make differently if you could do it all over again.
10. Do you prefer working with others or working independently? Why?
11. Considering your relationships with co-workers, customers, supervisors, etc.:

- Cite an example of how you have been effective in relating with others.
 - Cite an example of how you might not have been particularly effective. What might you do differently next time in that situation?
12. How do you prioritize your work?
 13. How well do you work under pressure?
 - Cite an example of a pressure situation you faced on the job. How did you handle it?
 14. What motivates you?
 15. What computers/software packages have you worked with:
 - For what purposes?
 - What computer training have you had?
 16. What was your most difficult assignment?
 17. What was your most rewarding assignment?
 18. What are your short-term goals?
 19. What are your long-term goals?
 - Have your long-term goals changed in recent years? If so, how?
 - What are you doing to achieve your long-term objectives?
 20. What have you done about your career development in the last few years?
 21. What kind of supervisor gets the best performance out of you?
 22. Describe your relationship with your supervisor.
 23. Regarding the vacant position:
 - Why are you interested in the position?
 - What in your background particularly qualifies you for this job?
 - Why do you think you would be good in this position?
 - Are there any reasons why you might not be able to perform the duties of this position? If so, explain.
 24. How do you feel about: Working overtime? Working on a particular work schedule? Travel? (Explain to applicant what specific requirements will be: amounts of travel/overtime, etc.)
 25. Describe a situation where someone directly contradicted your opinion in a meeting or in front of a supervisor and how you handled it. How did you feel? How did you manage your feelings? What ultimately happened as a result of this encounter?
 26. Provide an example of an interaction that you have had with senior-level officials or industry leaders. What was the context of the interaction? How did you ensure success in building the relationship?
 27. What strategies do you employ to persuade senior level people when you need their support?
 28. Why are you currently searching for a new position?
 29. What are the top three duties in the job you now have or in your most recent job?
 30. What are some typical decisions that you make and how do you make them? Provide examples.
 31. Where do you see yourself in five years?
 32. Describe for me your ideal organization.
 33. Describe what you would say if asked to talk about yourself in a group of people.
 34. If someone told you that you had made an error, describe how you would react and what you would say in your defense.

35. If someone asked you for assistance with a matter that is outside the scope of your job description, what would you do?
36. Describe what you would classify as a crisis.
37. You are angry about an unfair decision. How do you react?
38. Suppose you are in a situation where deadlines and priorities change frequently and rapidly. How would you handle it?
39. Tell me about a time when you were a part of a great team. What was your part in making the team effective?
40. Give me an example of a time when you had to deal with a difficult co-worker. How did you handle the situation?
41. Can you tell me about a time during your previous employment when you suggested a better way to perform a process?
42. Tell me about a personal or career goal that you have accomplished and why that was important to you.
43. Give an example of a time when you were trying to meet a deadline, you were interrupted, and did not make the deadline. How did you respond?
44. What strengths did you rely on in your last position to make you successful in your work?
45. What do you do when you know you are right, and your boss disagrees with you? Give me an example of when this has happened in your career.
46. Tell me about a situation you wish that you had handled differently based on the outcome. What was the situation? What would you change (or will you change) when faced with a similar situation?
47. Describe a time when you performed a task outside your perceived responsibilities. What was the task? Why did you perceive it to be outside your responsibilities? What was the outcome?
48. If you observed a co-worker who made inappropriate sexual or racial remarks to another employee, and it was obvious to you that the situation was creating an uncomfortable environment, what would you do?
49. What are your strengths?
50. What would your last boss say about you?
51. Describe how you like to be managed, and the best relationship you've had with a previous boss.
52. If I asked your previous/current co-workers about you, what would they say?
53. Explain the phrase "work ethic" and describe yours.
54. What kind of people do you find it most difficult to work with? For example, assume you are in a situation where you must deal with a person very different from yourself and you are finding it difficult. What would you do?
55. What methods do you use to make decisions? When do you find it most difficult to make a decision?
56. Describe a difficult time you have had dealing with an employee, customer, or co-worker. Why was it difficult? How did you handle it? What was the outcome?
57. How would your co-workers describe your work style or work habits?
58. What do you do when others resist or reject your ideas or actions?
59. What do you think are the best and worst parts of working in a team environment? How do you handle it?
60. Under what kinds of conditions do you learn best?

61. How would your past employers describe your response to hectic or stressful situations?
62. If I asked several of your co-workers about your greatest strength as a team member, what would they tell me?
63. What was the most creative thing you did in your last job?
64. What is your interpretation of “success?”
65. Describe an ideal work environment or “the perfect job.”
66. In what way(s) do you express your personality in the workplace?
67. Could you share with us a recent accomplishment of which you are most proud?
68. What would you have liked to do more of in your last position? What held you back?
69. Tell us a bit about your work background and then give us a description of how you think it relates to our current opening.
70. What are your qualifications in your area of expertise, i.e., what skills do you have that make you the best candidate for this position? Include any special training you have had (on-the-job, college, continuing education, seminars, reading, etc.) and related work experience.
71. Why did you apply for this position?
72. What skill set do you think you would bring to this position?
73. Tell me about your present or last job.
74. Why did you/do you want to leave?
75. What was your primary contribution/achievement? Biggest challenge?
76. What are your short-term and long-term goals?
77. In what areas would you like to develop further? What are your plans to do that? What are your career path interests?
78. Why should we hire you?
79. If you were offered this position, when would you be available to start?
80. After learning about this opportunity, what made you take the next step and apply for the job?
81. If you are the successful applicant, how would you expect to be different after a year in this position?
82. Now that you have learned about our organization and the position you are applying for, what hesitation or reluctance would you have in accepting this job if we offer it to you?
83. Do you have any other special qualifications relating to this position that I should know about?
84. What questions do you have for me?

Interview Questions for Supervisory Positions (Examples)

1. How do you view the job of a supervisor?
2. How many people have you supervised/led: in your current job? In previous jobs?
3. What types of positions have you supervised/led?
4. Describe your supervisory responsibilities and the extent of your authority.
5. Describe your leadership style?
6. What do you like best about being a supervisor? What do you like least?
7. What responsibility did you have in recruiting and selecting your staff? What criteria did you use in making hiring decisions?

8. How many immediate subordinates have you selected in the past two years? Regarding your selections, any surprises or disappointments? If so, explain.
9. What types of problems have you faced in directing your subordinate employees? How did you handle them? What was the outcome?
10. How would you handle a situation where one of your workers changes from a reliable, hardworking employee to a problem person?
11. Describe your method of motivating people.
 - Which approaches have worked best?
 - Which approaches have failed?
 - How do you get the best work from your subordinates?
12. What responsibility have you had in orienting and training new people?
13. Some managers keep a very close check on their organization. Others use a loose rein. What pattern do you follow?
14. How do you convey information to your people?
15. How do you maintain discipline in your organization?
 - What types of discipline problems have you had to deal with?
 - How did you handle them?
16. How is your group's morale? On what do you base your opinion?
17. Discuss your staff's record of turnover. To what do you attribute this good/poor record?
18. What planning processes have you found useful?
 - How do you go about them?
 - In what way do you feel you have improved in your planning abilities/methods?
19. What systems and procedures have you developed to improve the efficiency of your organization?
20. How does your experience bear on your qualifications for this position?
21. What things do you think would contribute to your effectiveness as a supervisor?
22. What things might interfere with your effectiveness as a supervisor?
23. What are the two or three most important things you have learned as a supervisor?
24. What would you recommend that would help this command to more effectively accomplish its mission?
25. Define professional behavior and/or conduct appropriate in the workplace.
26. Why do you think a team of people may not work well together?
27. Tell us about your management style - people, teamwork, direction?
28. Describe an ideal supervisor.
29. What is your own philosophy of management?
30. How have you participated in planning processes?
31. Is it more important to be a detail-oriented person, or a big picture person? Explain.
32. Describe for me a time when you have come across questionable business practices; how did you handle the situation?
33. A new policy is to be implemented organization wide. You do not agree with this new policy. How do you discuss this policy with your staff?
34. Describe for me a decision you made which would normally have been made by your supervisor? What was the outcome?
35. Discuss and differentiate between remediation, corrective action, and discipline.
36. Explain, step by step, how you have handled an employee who had performance problems.

37. Why should employees seek to improve their knowledge and skill base? How would you motivate them to do so?
38. What coaching or mentoring experience have you had? With groups or one-on-one? How did you determine the appropriate way to coach/mentor and what were the results?
39. Management requires both good writing and verbal skills for good communication. When it comes to giving information to employees that can be done either way, do you prefer to write a memo OR talk to the employee?
40. When making a decision to fire an employee, do you find it easy because of the organization's needs OR difficult because of the employee's needs?
41. Managing requires motivating employees as well as accomplishing tasks. Do you find it more natural to point out what's wrong so employees can accomplish tasks competently OR to praise employees for their work and then point out what may need correcting?
42. Managers need good information, and managers need to make good decisions. Do you tend to gather information up to a deadline to make a better-informed decision OR gather just enough information to make a good decision quickly?
43. Are you best at dealing with details and day-to-day operations OR with concepts, envisioning and future planning? Give an example.
44. Tell me about your current position or most recent position and how you helped the organization accomplish its goals and mission.
45. Have you ever had to champion an unpopular change? How did you handle it?

Interview Questions for Technical Positions (Examples)

1. What has been your greatest achievement in your current position? In your career?
2. How do you stay abreast of the changes that occur in your career field?
3. How do you approach and resolve controversial situations in the career field? Provide an example.
4. What types of projects/programs/systems have you worked on? Where and when? Give some examples of the more difficult work you have done.
5. Give some examples of work you have done requiring up-to-date knowledge of policies, practices, and procedures.
6. Tell how you gained your knowledge of this occupation.
7. What new methods of accomplishing your work have you suggested? Were they tried? If so, how successful were they?
8. Cite an example where you had to meet a tight time schedule, last minute deadline or work during an emergency. How did you handle it?
9. What kinds of instructions have you had to follow to perform the work?
10. How much help do you get from your supervisor in performing your work? What work can you do independently, without the help of a supervisor or more experienced individual?
11. Have you helped or guided others in the performance of this work?
12. Describe any strategic initiatives in which you were involved. What was your role? What was the outcome of your efforts? What did you learn from that experience?
13. Describe a situation where you had to influence others to pursue a direction that they were initially resistant to follow. How strong was the resistance? What tactics did you use?

- to influence those who did not share your perspective? What was the outcome of the situation?
14. Tell us about a policy setting project on which you have worked? What was the project scope?
 15. Have your leadership skills been challenged? How did you encourage collaboration?
 16. What strategies have you employed to keep up with the pace of change in our industry?
 17. What publications have you read in the last six months that are related to the occupation?
 18. What strategies have you used to stay abreast of changing regulations and requirements?
 19. How do you share information and knowledge learned with others to aid in their professional development?
 20. Describe a time when you had to demonstrate your knowledge of policies, procedures, and regulations. How did the situation arise? What was the outcome? How have you used policies, procedures, and regulations to drive or promote changes?
 21. What characteristics do you feel are necessary for success in this career field?
 22. Do you have any other specialized qualifications I should know about? If so, discuss.
 23. Do you have any additional questions about the position or the training requirements?

Interview Questions for Clerical, Secretarial, and Assistant Positions (Examples)

1. What are your current office responsibilities?
2. In what administrative or management areas are you particularly interested? What training or experience have you had in these areas?
3. In your current job, what are your highest priorities?
4. What is the pace of your current job? What is the extent of your workload? What types of pressure situations do you face? How often?
5. What were some of the more unusual assignments you have been given? What new skills/initiative did they require? How successful were you in completing them?
6. In your present job, on what do you spend most of your time?
7. In what ways do YOU contribute to your organization's success?
8. What responsibility do you have for dealing with other departments?
9. What equipment or supplies have you purchased or recommended?
10. What software packages (office automation) have you used? Do you have any other computer experience or training?
11. Cite some examples of experiences you have had in arranging meetings/conferences, etc., involving coordination with several people. What types of meetings/conferences were they? How many and which people were involved? What special problems did you encounter?
12. Describe your experience in maintaining records. What types of records? For what purpose? What computational skills were required?
13. What types of filing systems have you used? What systems have you organized? Describe your experience in assembling materials/reports from several different sources.
14. Describe your experience in collecting and compiling data (statistical, financial, inventory, etc.).
15. What experience have you had in making travel arrangements?

16. What types of directives, instructions, manuals, etc., have you worked with? For what purposes? What new methods for accomplishing your work have you suggested? Were they tried? If so, how successful were they?
17. What English, mathematics, or business courses have you taken? Where were these courses taken (high school, college, government courses, etc.)? How recently? What grades did you get?
18. Do you have any other special qualifications for this position that we haven't discussed? If so, describe.

Interview Questions for Trades and Labor Positions (Examples)

General Trades and Labor Positions

1. On what types of equipment/systems/facilities have you worked? Where did you work on this equipment, etc.?
2. Give some examples of the more difficult work you have done.
3. Have you done any work on prototype equipment? If so, describe.
4. What tools, instruments, and/or equipment have you worked with? Where have you used them? On what type of work? What type of training did you receive?
5. What types of test equipment have you worked with? For what purpose? To what tolerances?
6. What precision measuring instruments have you used?
7. Give some examples of your work that required precise timing, accurate dimensions, precise fit, etc.
8. Describe work you have done which required speed and accuracy of hand.
9. What are some of the more common problems you encounter in your work?
10. For equipment, describe your experience in (choose as appropriate): Troubleshooting, Overhauling, Aligning, Testing, Modifying, Constructing, Preventive Maintenance, Reconditioning, Calibrating, Repairing, Disassembling, Assembling, or Installing.
11. Tell how you've gained and used your knowledge. From the theoretical side (as in books). From the practical side (as in "hands on" work experience). How recently was this knowledge acquired? How recently was it last used?
12. Where did you learn the skills of your trade (on-the-job training, apprentice program, other training)?
13. Give some examples of work you have done requiring up-to-date knowledge of trade practices.
14. Tell about your studies in sciences, mathematics, mechanical drawing and trades. Where did you study these subjects? What grades did you get? What types of measurements can you perform?
15. Discuss any hobbies you have that show your interest in trades, technical or scientific fields.
16. What kinds of materials have you worked with? Where did you use them? For what kind of work?
17. Tell how you gained your knowledge of shop practice (e.g., conserving materials, using correct parts, keeping exact tolerances, handling different situations, "tricks of the trade").
18. What experience have you had in planning, layout, and setup of operations? What was the size and scope of this work? What were the more difficult types of planning, layout,

and setup you have done? Describe the tools you used, calculations involved, tolerances, etc.

19. What new methods of accomplishing your work have you suggested? Were they tried? If so, how successful were they?
20. Describe experience you have had where you were required to make reports or keep records, logs, inventories, etc.
21. Describe experience you have had where you were required to keep things neat, clean, and in order.
22. Cite an example where you had to meet a time schedule, deadline, or emergency. How did you handle it?
23. Have you used parts manuals and/or catalogs in your work? If so, which manuals/catalogs? For what purpose?
24. What kinds of instructions have you had to follow in shop work, on jobs, or in the military?
25. Describe your experience working with blueprints, diagrams, schematics, etc.
26. What responsibilities have you been given on jobs, in the Armed Forces, in your community, etc.?
27. How much help do you get from your supervisor in doing your work? What work can you do by yourself, without the help of a supervisor? Have you ever helped or guided others (helpers, junior workers, etc.)?
28. Describe work you did where you had to observe safety rules to avoid injuring yourself or others. What dangers were involved? What safety training have you had? What is your safety record? Tell about any accidents you have had in the last 5 years.
29. Do you have any other specialized qualifications I should know about? If so, discuss.

Inspector Positions

30. What kind of inspections have you done on your own work or that of others? What mechanical or electrical instruments have you used to check work? What was the purpose of the inspection? What instructions, specifications, or other guidelines did you use?

Estimator Positions

31. Describe your experience in estimating time, materials, and cost. Discuss the type and complexity of the operations. What was the purpose of the estimating? Tell about any new or prototype work for which you estimated.

Leader Positions

32. Have you ever taught or led helpers, apprentices, or intermediate workers? If so: Discuss the kind of instruction or leadership you gave. Explain how you encouraged those led to work effectively. How successful were you? What other leading have you done (in the military, in community activities, etc.)?

Wage Supervisor Positions

33. Describe your experience supervising others. Tell about the numbers and kinds of workers you supervised. Describe the nature of work directed. What relationships did you have with operating groups other than your own unit? Describe your supervisory responsibilities and the extent of your authority.

CONDUCTING REFERENCE CHECKS

Conducting reference checks is the final step in the selection process. Checking references is critical to verifying the validity of the information provided in resumes and interviews. Information provided by previous supervisors can give insight into the individual's past performance, interaction with supervisors and peers, and uncover information that might have been identified in the qualifications, interviews, and interview processes.

Some supervisors skip this stage in the process, but they are strongly advised to conduct references. Reference checks have been shown to be a useful predictor in job performance. Structured reference checks can enhance the validity and usefulness in the selection process.

Supervisors are required to maintain interview notes and reference check notes for two years. If there are disputes regarding the selection process, the records should be kept until the Coast Guard is notified by agency counsel that all pending disputes have been resolved, all litigation concluded, and any applicable periods for seeking further review have elapsed, and in any event, for a minimum of six years from the date the facts giving rise to the dispute occurred.

Further guidance on conducting reference checks (with sample questions) can be found at the following links:

OPM Guide – Reference Checking: [Reference Checking Guide \(opm.gov\)](https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/recruitment-selection-hiring/reference-checking/)

OPM Guidance – Reference Checking 101: 3 Easy Steps: [Reference Checking 101 \(opm.gov\)](https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/recruitment-selection-hiring/reference-checking-101-3-easy-steps/)

OPM Guidance – Reference Checking: [Reference Checking \(opm.gov\)](https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/recruitment-selection-hiring/reference-checking/)

GLOSSARY

Civilian Recruiter - An individual who, in conjunction with the HR Specialist, can develop recruitment strategies to wide variety of diverse associations and organizations to obtain a talented pool of candidates.

Delegated Examining Unit (DEU) - Authority delegated from the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to agencies which allows for competitive examination and certification to include development of rating criteria, evaluation of applicants, and development of competitive certificates of eligibles for career and career-conditional appointment. Note: The Coast Guard has the authority through a redelegation from DHS.

Hiring Official - The individual responsible for making a particular hiring decision. This is frequently the future employee's supervisor. Also known as the selecting official.

Human Resources (HR) Specialist - An individual assigned to the Civilian HR Office who is primarily responsible for carrying out a serviced organization's recruitment, assessment, and hiring procedures.

Manager - Typically the head or assistant head of a major organization within the Coast Guard. Position which directs the work of an organizational unit; is held accountable for the success of specific line or staff functions; monitors and evaluates the progress of the organization toward meeting goals; and makes adjustments in objectives, work plans, and commitment of resources.

Military Spouse Appointing Authority - An appointing authority used to appoint military spouses to temporary, term or permanent positions if they meet certain conditions, e.g., appointed within 2 years of service member's PCS move. Spouses appointed under this authority are not entitled to any type of preference.

Position Description (PD) - The PD briefly describes the key or major duties and responsibilities of a position. The primary use of PDs is for classification and pay purposes. However, a PD also serves as the basis for qualification determination and preparation of an employee's performance or training plan.

Reasonable Accommodation - A workplace accommodation for a person with a disability when doing so does not result in undue hardship to the agency. The accommodation makes it easier for the employee to successfully perform the essential duties of the position. Examples of reasonable accommodations include providing interpreters, readers, or other personal assistance; modifying job duties; restructuring work sites; providing flexible work schedules or work sites; and providing accessible technology or other workplace adaptive equipment.

Selective Placement Program Coordinator - An individual in HR who helps management to recruit and hire people with disabilities. Some of the roles and responsibilities are: advising hiring officials about candidates available for placement in jobs; helping persons with disabilities get information about job opportunities; and providing information to organizations involved in the placement of applicants with disabilities.

Subject Matter Expert (SME) - An individual with comprehensive knowledge of the duties and responsibilities necessary to perform a specific job. The overall role and responsibility of the SME is to

serve on an SME Rating Panel to rate applicants on possession of job criteria. The SME must serve in a neutral and objective capacity.

Superior Qualifications/Special Need Authority - This is a discretionary authority used to set the rate of pay of a newly appointed employee at a rate above the minimum rate of the grade because of the candidate's superior qualifications or a special need for the candidate's services.

Supervisor - A position or employee that accomplishes work through the administrative and technical direction of other people and at least meets the minimum requirement for coverage under the General Schedule Supervisory Guide or appropriate Federal Wage System Job Grading Standard for Supervisors.

USA Hire - USA Hire is an innovative assessment platform designed to provide valid, reliable, and fair skills-based assessments to help federal agencies identify top talent.

USA Staffing (USAS) – USA Staffing is the Office of Personnel Management's end-to-end talent acquisition system for Federal agencies. This system automates the hiring process and supports Hiring Managers and Human Resource Specialists in acquiring, assessing, certifying, selecting, and onboarding qualified candidates.

Veterans Employment Opportunity Act (VEOA) - This is a competitive service appointing authority that allows eligible veterans to compete for competitive service positions under an agency's Merit Promotion procedures when the vacancy announcement is open to external candidates and the individual is selected from the list of best qualified. To be eligible, the individual must be a preference eligible or a veteran who substantially completed 3 or more years of active service.

Veterans' Preference - By law, qualified veterans who are disabled or who served on active duty during military campaigns or certain other specified time periods are given preference over non-veterans both in hiring and in retention during reductions in force.

Veterans Recruitment Appointment (VRA) - A noncompetitive appointment of a veteran in the excepted service. It leads to competitive status and career or career conditional tenure upon satisfactory completion of a two-year trial period and completion of any education and training. Usually, a formal education and/or training plan is prepared. This is a combined effort between the supervisor, selectee, and the HR office.