

Understanding Eligibilities and Qualifications as Part of the Application Process For Other than Commissary Career Program (CCP) Job Announcements

Eligibilities. As part of the application process, you identify how you want HR to consider you for the position, referred to as selecting your eligibility/eligibilities. Not selecting at least one eligibility or selecting a single eligibility that does not apply to you removes you from further consideration. Eligibilities vary based on who can apply for the position. Most eligibilities provide detailed information to help you understand them. Before selecting an eligibility, carefully read the stated requirements, determine whether you meet all the requirements and be sure to include all required documents with your application to support your consideration for the selected eligibility.

These two eligibilities, typically seen on merit promotion (MP) announcements, provide little information about what the terms mean or how to apply them to your situation.

- Reassignment, Change to Lower Grade or Re-promotion (Noncompetitive)
- Promotion (Competitive)

The information below provides a definition followed by some examples of the most common scenarios associated with these two eligibilities. This information intends only to provide further clarification of the definition's practical meaning. If after reading this information you are uncertain which applies to you, you may contact DLA HR for further assistance or select all the eligibilities you think might apply to you and your situation.

DeCA positions are in the General Schedule (GS) pay plan or the Federal Wage System (FWS) pay plan. The FWS includes Wage Grade (WG), Wage Leader (WL), and Wage Supervisor (WS). Determining whether your selection for a position would result in a reassignment, change to lower grade or promotion can be confusing. When moving from a FWS position to a GS position or vice versa, the determination oftentimes involves setting pay, which requires a level of knowledge retained by HR professionals, and not easily conveyed here.

Noncompetitive Choices

Reassignment—the change of an employee from one position to another without promotion or change to lower grade. Reassignment includes movement to (1) a position in a new occupational series or to another position in the same occupational series, and (2) a different position at the same grade but with a change in salary that is the result of different local prevailing wage rates or a different locality payment.

Examples

- 1) Your occupational series changes and your pay plan and grade level remain the same.
Examples: GS-0301-07 to GS-0341-07; WS-6907-04 to WS-6914-04
- 2) Your pay plan, occupational series, and grade remain the same. Example: GS-0501-12 to GS-0501-12; WG-6914-04 to WG-6914-04
- 3) Your pay plan, occupational series, and grade remain the same and your pay changes because your geographic location is different. Examples: GS-0201-14 in Alaska with a total annual salary of \$133,480 moves to GS-0201-14 in Washington, D.C. with a total annual salary of \$133,689; WL-6914-04 in Alaska with an hourly rate of \$23.12 moves to WL-6914-04 in Utah with an hourly salary of \$17.52.

Change to Lower Grade—personnel action that moves an employee, while serving continuously in the same agency, to a position (1) at a lower grade when both the old and new positions are under the

General Schedule or under the same type graded wage schedule, or (2) with a lower rate of basic pay when both the old and the new positions are under the same type ungraded wage schedule or in a different pay-method category.

Examples

- 1) Your pay plan stays the same and your grade level decreases. Examples: GS-13 to GS-11; WG-05 to WG-04.
- 2) Your wage pay plan changes and your hourly rate decreases. Example: WL-06 with hourly rate of \$24.56 to WG-05 with hourly rate of \$23.99.

Re-promotion—placement into a grade previously held on a nontemporary (i.e., permanent) basis in the competitive service.

Example

Several years ago, you occupied a permanent position in the competitive service at the GS-10 level. Your current position is a GS-07. If you apply and are selected for a GS-10 position, you can be re-promoted to the GS-10 position based on having permanently held that grade previously.

Competitive Choice

Promotion¹—a personnel action that changes an employee to a position (1) at a higher grade level within the same job classification system and pay schedule (aka pay plan) or (2) with a higher rate of basic pay in a different job classification system and pay schedule.

Examples

- 1) Your pay plan stays the same and your grade level increases. Example: GS-06 to GS-07 or GS-07 to GS-09.
- 2) Your pay plan changes from FWS to GS and your annual rate of pay increases by any amount (even just \$.01).
 - a. You are a WL with an hourly rate of \$27.07 applying for a GS-08 position. The job announcement shows a salary range of \$45,810 to \$59,557.
 - b. Calculate your annual salary by multiplying your hourly rate by 2087. ($27.07 \times 2087 = 56495.09$). Your annual salary rounds to \$56,495.
 - c. Compare the result of 2b with the annual salary range appearing on the job announcement. If your annualized salary falls within that range, your selection for the position may be a promotion.²

Qualifications.

For GS positions and as part of the application process, you identify how you meet the minimum qualification requirements for the position. Based on grade level, there may be as many as three ways to meet the minimum qualifications required by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM).

- 1) Possess the required experience at the appropriate grade level (next lowest grade),
- 2) Possess the educational equivalent of the required experience, or

¹ For these purposes, promotion refers to movement with an increase in pay rather than an increase in hierarchical standing.

² This one requires research, calculations, and comparisons. To find the correct comparative salary chart for your situation, access <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages/2018/general-schedule/>. You can then compare the annualized wage salary to the GS salary table for the specific location and grade level.

- 3) Possess a combination of experience and education that equals 100% of the qualification requirement.

Read the qualifications section carefully as not all grade levels permit substituting education for the required experience. If the position does not permit substituting education for experience then you may not meet qualifications based having education or on combining experience and education.

If the announcement covers multiple grade levels, there are more than two responses from which to choose, and you can only select one response. When choosing your response, select the highest level of qualification you possess and be sure that the information in your resume supports that response.

Example: You are a GS-05 applying for promotion to GS-07. Promotion to GS-07 requires that you have one year of creditable specialized experience equivalent to the next lower grade, which provided you with the particular knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform successfully the duties of the position, and is directly in or related to the position. The announcement will contain examples of creditable experience. As the vacancy announcement covers grade levels GS-05, GS-07 and GS-09, there are response options for each of those grade levels. You have been in your current GS-05 position for 13 months, not held a position higher than GS-05, and have no formal education above high school. Do you choose the response stating that you have one year of specialized experience at the GS-05 level, the response stating that you have one year of specialized experience at the GS-07 level, or something else? In this instance, you should select the response stating that you have one year of specialized experience at the GS-05 level.

FWS positions use a job element method rather than the GS method described above. Your responses to the job element statements/questions are matched against what the work calls for to determine if you have the required knowledge, skills, and abilities.