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Date

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT**

**HUMAN RESOURCES (HR) BULLETIN #015, FY05, 5 CFR 330**

**SUBJECT:** Vacancy Announcements

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** Upon release of this HR Bulletin

**SUPERSEDES:** N/A

**BACKGROUND:** To ensure the Department of Commerce is attracting the best qualified candidates with the most appropriate skills sets, the vacancy announcements should be carefully written in plain English and easily understood by those with no Federal or Commerce experience. Clear vacancy announcements are the underpinnings of an effective recruitment and hiring process that allows potential candidates to understand what the job entails and its qualifications. With minimal effort, the candidate should ascertain whether the job is a good fit and whether the job requirements match the candidate's skills sets and interests. All information pertinent to the position should be included in the vacancy announcement.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this HR Bulletin is to provide guidance on the content placed within vacancy announcements to ensure the best qualified candidates are recruited for the best possible job fit.

**PROCEDURES:** Minimum qualifications must be defined explicitly in the vacancy announcements, followed with relevant examples cited. These should be written in plain English for those not familiar with Government operations, devoid of acronyms. Candidates should not be referred to OPM operating procedures or other similar links. All relevant information for the position should be included in the announcement.

*Example: Security Specialist (ZA-0080-III) - applicant must have at least 1 year of specialized experience that is equivalent to at least the next lower grade level (GS-9). Specialized experience is that which equips the applicant with the particular knowledge, skills and abilities to perform successfully the duties of the job and should include, but is not limited to, work activities such as developing,*

*implementing, and revising security policies, procedures, standards, and regulations for multiple security programs and related activities.*

Candidates must be provided with complete instructions in the vacancy announcements on how to apply and a list of appropriate documents that must be submitted in order to meet qualifications. Applicants should be advised up front that if they do not possess a particular knowledge, skill, or ability they will receive no further consideration.

In addition, all qualification requirements must be provided, including selective placement factors, in vacancy announcements so that applicants are aware of the knowledges, skills, and abilities required to perform the duties and responsibilities of the announced job.

Vacancy announcements must be sufficiently detailed to attract qualified candidates. The jobs should be explained in a way that is interesting and entices qualified candidates to apply. The announcements should highlight the unique benefits of working in a particular bureau (i.e., interesting work, impact of mission, flexible hours, on-site child care, proximity to metro, metro subsidy, specialized training, career progression, state-of-the-art fitness center, etc.), as well as working in the Federal Government (i.e., opportunity to make a difference, health insurance, thrift savings, retirement, etc.).

**OVERSIGHT:** Periodic reviews will be conducted by the Department and Staffing Counterpart Group of vacancy announcements and candidates to ensure proper and appropriate placements.

**REFERENCES:** 5 CFR 330.707(b), 5 CFR 300.603

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