


Approved for Release
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Date

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

HUMAN RESOURCES (HR) BULLETIN #073, FY 08

SUBJECT: Evaluating Veterans Employment Opportunities Act Eligibles
for Administrative Careers With America Positions

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon release of this HR Bulletin

EXPIRATION DATE: Effective until canceled or superseded

BACKGROUND: The Veterans Employment Opportunities Act (VEOA) of 1998 as amended by Section 511 of the Veterans Millennium Health Care Act (Pub. Law 106-117), November 30, 1999, provides that agencies must allow eligible veterans to apply for positions announced under merit assignment procedures when the agency is recruiting from outside its own workforce. "Agency" in this context means the Department of Commerce, not individual bureaus. A VEOA eligible who competes under merit assignment procedures, and is selected, is given a career or career conditional appointment. Veterans' preference is not a factor in these appointments.

The Administrative Careers With America (ACWA) program offers competitive, entry-level (General Schedule 5 and 7 or equivalent) employment through written examination and multiple choice questionnaires in various occupational series. The Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) Qualification Standards for General Schedule Positions, General Policies and Instructions, Section 2, Part E.9 (d) states that if a test is required for an occupational series, applicants who are subject to that test must pass or have previously passed it to be eligible for initial appointment. Section V mandates a written test for positions covered by the ACWA program.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this HR Bulletin is to implement policy for when a VEOA eligible applies under merit assignment procedures for an ACWA position.

COVERAGE: This HR Bulletin applies to all ACWA positions within the Department of Commerce and its Operating Units at the General Schedule 5 and 7 or equivalent levels.

POLICY: VEOA eligibles who apply for positions covered by the ACWA program must pass the appropriate ACWA assessment before the Operating Unit can evaluate the eligible under merit assignment procedures (MAP). While the VEOA affords eligibles the ability to be considered under MAP, when they would not otherwise be eligible, the VEOA does not exempt eligibles from the test requirement for the occupational series and grade level. The MAP vacancy announcement **must** inform VEOA eligibles of the requirement to take and pass the ACWA assessment before they can be evaluated for the position.

Operating Units must provide OPM the names and contact information of VEOA eligibles who applied for the position under their MAP. OPM will in turn contact the eligibles and schedule a date and time for the assessment. OPM will notify the Operating Unit of the assessment results for each eligible.

It is the VEOA eligible's responsibility to take the assessment within the time period allotted by OPM. If the VEOA eligible fails to take the assessment within the allotted time period, the individual will be considered "ineligible" for the position.

The MAP vacancy announcement **must** thoroughly explain the assessment process. In addition, it must inform VEOA eligibles that they do not need to take the assessment if they have already passed the exam for the series and grade they are applying to; however, they need to submit documentation of their passing score.

Merit Assignment Vacancy announcements for ACWA positions are required to have the following statement: Applicants applying under the Veterans Employment Opportunities Act (VEOA) must take and receive a passing score on the appropriate Administrative Careers With America (ACWA) assessment examination. If you have previously been assessed for the position of (title, series, grade) you do not need to be re-assessed; however, you need to submit documentation from the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) of passing the assessment. Only VEOA eligibles who receive a passing score on the ACWA examination will be evaluated for this position under merit assignment procedures. Applicants will be contacted by OPM to schedule a date and time to take the assessment. Failure to take the assessment within the allotted time period will deem you ineligible for consideration under merit assignment.

REFERENCES: The Veterans Employment Opportunities Act (VEOA) of 1998 as amended by Section 511 of the Veterans Millennium Health Care Act (Pub. Law 106-117), November 30, 1999; OPM's Qualification Standard for General Schedule Positions, Section E.9(d), and Section V.

OFFICE OF POLICY AND BENEFITS: OPBservices@doc.gov