



**United States
Department of
Agriculture**

**Food Safety
and Inspection
Service**

**FSIS Directive
4300.3**

Career Transition Assistance Program

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOOD SAFETY AND INSPECTION SERVICE
WASHINGTON, DC

CHANGE TRANSMITTAL SHEET

- DIRECTIVE
 REVISION
 AMENDMENT
 OTHER

FSIS DIRECTIVE
CAREER TRANSITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

4300.3

1/8/99

I. GENERAL

A. The Career Transition Assistance Program provides eligible surplus and displaced employees with career transition services and two job selection priority Plans.

B. The Program provides surplus and displaced employees with:

1. Assistance and encourages them to take charge of their own careers.
2. The necessary tools to empower them to make informed decisions about career transitions.
3. Career transition services that enable them to explore self-employment, and job opportunities within the Federal Government and private-sector.

II. BACKGROUND

A. As the Government downsizes and restructures, some Federal employees are losing their jobs. These individuals need assistance to find other employment. To initiate this effort, on September 12, 1995, the President issued a memorandum entitled "Career Transition Assistance for Federal Employees." The memorandum requires Federal executive agencies to establish career transition programs to help surplus and displaced workers find jobs.

B. To implement the President's Memorandum, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) initially issued interim regulations, effective February 29, 1996. OPM issued final regulations on June 9, 1997. These regulations specify that a transition assistance program consists of the following:

DISTRIBUTION:
All Employees

OPI:
HRD – Employment Services and
Policy Branch

1. Career transition services for the Department's surplus and displaced employees.
2. Policies for retraining displaced employees.
3. A policy that requires the selection of a well-qualified, surplus or displaced Agency employee who applies for a vacant position in the local commuting area, before selecting any other candidate from either within or outside the Department.
4. A policy that requires the selection of a well-qualified, displaced employee from another Department who applies for a vacant position in the local commuting area, before selecting any other candidate from outside the Department.

C. FSIS has implemented a Career Transition Assistance Program that complies with OPM's final regulations. The Program includes transition services and two job selection priority Plans. The two selection priority plans are the Career Transition Assistance Plan (CTAP) and the Interagency Career Transition Assistance Plan (ICTAP).

D. CTAP provides special selection priority for eligible displaced and surplus employees seeking jobs within USDA.

E. ICTAP provides special selection priority for displaced employees seeking jobs in various Departments (**EXAMPLE:** USDA or DOT). When ICTAP went into operation, the pre-existing OPM Interagency Placement Program was suspended. Displaced employees who were enrolled in the Placement Program at the time of its suspension received notification from OPM concerning the suspension and their eligibility for the new ICTAP.

F. CTAP and ICTAP do have some differences, such as, the definition of displaced employee and the eligibility requirements. Also, there is no provision for surplus employees under ICTAP.

III. CANCELLATION

This transmittal is canceled when contents are filed.


for Deputy Administrator
Office of Management

CAREER TRANSITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PART ONE--BASIC PROVISIONS

	Title	Page No.
I.	PURPOSE.	1
II.	(RESERVED	1
III.	(RESERVED)	1
IV.	REFERENCES	1
V.	ABBREVIATIONS AND FORMS	2
VI.	POLICY.	3
VII.	EFFECTIVE DATES	3
VIII.	RESPONSIBILITIES	3
IX.	DEFINITIONS	4

PART TWO--CAREER TRANSITION SERVICES

I.	ELIGIBILITY	7
II.	TYPES OF SERVICES	7
III.	ACCESS TO AND USE OF SERVICES	7
	A. Informing Employees	7
	B. Point of Contact.	7
	C. Surplus and Displaced Employees with Disabilities.	8
	D. Use of Excused Absence.	8
	E. Use After Separation	8
IV.	RETRAINING FOR ELIGIBLE EMPLOYEES.	8

PART THREE--SPECIAL SELECTION PROVISIONS UNDER CTAP

Section One--Basic Provisions

I.	POLICY	11
II.	APPLICABILITY.	11
III.	DEFINITIONS	11
	A. Displaced Employee	11
	B. Surplus Employee	11
	C. Other Terms	12
IV.	(RESERVED)	12

Section Two--Eligibility, Application Procedure, and Selection

V. ELIGIBILITY FOR SELECTION PRIORITY 12
A. Requirements 12
B. Proof of Eligibility 12
C. Period of Eligibility 13
D. Eligibility Notification 13
E. Eligibility Cancellation 14
VI. LOCATING AND APPLYING FOR VACANCIES 14
A. Locating Vacancies. 14
B. Open Continuous Vacancies 15
C. Application Procedure 15
VII. SELECTION 15
A. Consideration of Candidates 15
B. Order of Selection for Filling Vacancies
 From Within USDA. 16
C. Referral of Applicants. 16
D. Qualification Review and Results. 16
ATTACHMENT 3-1, Exemptions From Special Selection
 Priority Under CTAP 19

PART FOUR--SPECIAL SELECTION PROVISIONS UNDER ICTAP

Section One--Basic Provisions

I. POLICY. 21
II. APPLICABILITY. 21
A. Applicable Items. 21
B. Non-Applicable Items. 21
III. DEFINITIONS 21
A. Displaced Employee 21
B. Other Terms 22
IV. (RESERVED) 22

Section Two--Eligibility, Application Procedure, and Selection

V.	ELIGIBILITY FOR SELECTION PRIORITY	23
	A. Requirements.	23
	B. Proof of Eligibility.	23
	C. Period of Eligibility	24
	D. Eligibility Notification and Cancellation	24
VI.	LOCATING AND APPLYING FOR VACANCIES	24
VII.	SELECTION	25
	A. Consideration of Candidates	25
	B. Order of Selection for Filling Vacancies	
	From Outside USDA	25
	C. Qualification Review and Results	25
	ATTACHMENT 4-1, Exemptions From Special	
	Selection Priority Under ICTAP	27

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOOD SAFETY AND INSPECTION SERVICE
WASHINGTON, DC

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CAREER TRANSITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

PART ONE--BASIC PROVISIONS

I. PURPOSE

This directive:

- A. Delegates responsibilities for implementing a career transition assistance program.
- B. Explains the availability and use of career transition services.
- C. States special selection priority provisions for CTAP and ICTAP.

II. (RESERVED)

III. (RESERVED)

IV. REFERENCES

Presidential Memorandum dated 9/12/95, "Career Transition Assistance for Federal Employees"

5 CFR 5.1, Regulations, Investigation, and Enforcement (Rule V),
Civil Service Regulations

5 CFR 300, Subpart E, Employment (General), Use of Private Sector Temporaries

5 CFR 315, Career and Career-Conditional Employment

5 CFR 315.701, Career and Career-Conditional Employment, Incumbents of
Positions Brought Into the Competitive Service

DISTRIBUTION:
All Employees

OPI:
HRD – Employment Services and
Policy Branch

- 5 CFR 316.701, Temporary and Term Employment, Public or Private Enterprise Taken Over By Government
- 5 CFR 316.702, Temporary and Term Employment, Excepted Positions Brought Into the Competitive Service
- 5 CFR 330, Recruitment, Selection, and Placement (General)
- 5 CFR 330, Subpart B, Reemployment Priority List
- 5 CFR 330, Subpart F, Agency Career Transition Assistance Plans for Local Surplus and Displaced Employees
- 5 CFR 334, Temporary Assignment of Employees Between Federal Agencies and State, Local, and Indian Tribal Governments, Institutions of Higher Education, and Other Eligible Organizations
- 5 CFR 335, Promotion and Internal Placement
- 5 CFR 351, Reduction In Force
- 5 CFR 353, Restoration to Duty From Uniformed Service or Compensable Injury

- 5 U.S.C. Chapter 81, Compensation for Work Injuries, Subchapter I, Generally
- 5 U.S.C. Chapter 83, Retirement, Section 8336, Immediate Retirement and Section 8337, Disability Retirement
- 5 U.S.C. Chapter 84, Federal Employees' Retirement System, Section 8414, Early Retirement; Section 8451, Disability Retirement; and Section 8456, Military Reserve Technicians
- 5 U.S.C. 3594, Guaranteed Placement In Other Personnel Systems, Chapter 35, Retention Preference, Restoration, and Reemployment, Subchapter V, Removal, Reinstatement, and Guaranteed Placement in the Senior Executive Service

USDA Personnel Bulletin No. 330-1, USDA Career Transition Assistance Plan

V. ABBREVIATIONS AND FORMS

The following will be referred to in their shortened form:

CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CTAP	Career Transition Assistance Plan
ESPB	Employment Services and Policy Branch, HRD
EEO	Equal Employment Opportunity
FJOB	Federal Job Opportunities Bulletin
HRD	Human Resources Division
ICTAP	Interagency Career Transition Assistance Plan
OPM	Office of Personnel Management

OWCP	Office of Workers' Compensation Programs
POB	Personnel Operations Branch, HRD
RIF	Reduction In Force
RPL	Reemployment Priority List
SES	Senior Executive Service
SPO	Servicing Personnel Office (Headquarters-ESPB and Field-POB)

Form SF-50, Notification of Personnel Action

VI. POLICY

It is FSIS policy to:

- A. Provide career transition assistance to employees affected by downsizing and restructuring.
- B. Provide career transition services and special selection priority to eligible displaced and surplus employees.
- C. Reasonably accommodate surplus and displaced employees with disabilities.

VII. EFFECTIVE DATES

- A. CTAP became effective on April 28, 1996, and operates through September 30, 1999, unless further extended because of severe downsizing.
- B. ICTAP became effective on February 29, 1996, and operates through September 30, 1999, unless further extended because of severe downsizing.

VIII. RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. **Employees** are responsible for:
 - 1. Their own careers.
 - 2. Actively seeking assistance to attain personal and professional goals.
 - 3. Applying for vacancies in which they are interested.

B. Managers are responsible for:

1. Ensuring efficient and effective operation of the Career Transition Assistance Program.
2. Considering, fully and fairly, each employee referred under the Program.
3. Complying with the spirit and procedural requirements of the Program.

C. SPO's and ESPB.

1. **SPO's** are responsible for:
 - a. Assisting and advising employees and managers on the Program.
 - b. Providing pertinent materials or advisory services to surplus and displaced employees on appropriate career transition assistance resources and out-placement services.
 - c. Verifying eligibility and notifying surplus and displaced employees of eligibility under the Program.
 - d. Reporting information annually by December 1 of each year for the Agency report.
2. **ESPB** is responsible for:
 - a. Overseeing the operation of the Program.
 - b. Serving as the point of contact with the SPO staffing specialists for additional Program interpretation or clarification.
 - c. Submitting annual Agency reports to the Department.

IX. DEFINITIONS

- A. The following definitions apply to this entire directive:

1. **Eligible Employee.** A surplus or displaced employee who meets the conditions of eligibility in Part Three, Section Two, subparagraph V. A. or Part Four, Section Two, subparagraph V. A.

2. **Local Commuting Area.** The geographical area that usually constitutes one area for employment purposes. It includes any population center (or two or more neighboring ones) and the surrounding localities in which people live and can reasonably be expected to travel back and forth daily to their usual employment.

3. **Special Selection Priority.** Surplus and displaced employees who meet eligibility requirements must be selected over any other candidate for vacancies in the local commuting area for which they apply and are found well-qualified.

4. **Vacancy.** A competitive service position which the agency is filling for a total of 121 days or more, including all extensions, regardless of whether the agency issues a specific vacancy announcement.

5. **Well-Qualified Employee.** An eligible employee who meets **all** of the following criteria:

a. Meets basic qualification and eligibility requirements for the position, including any medical qualifications, suitability, and minimum educational and experience requirements.

b. Meets the "fully acceptable" or equivalent level for each knowledge, skill, and ability.

c. Is physically qualified, with reasonable accommodation where appropriate, to perform essential duties of the position.

d. Is able to satisfactorily perform the duties of the position upon entry.

B. **Displaced Employee** is defined differently under CTAP and ICTAP. Its definition is provided in Part Three, Section One, subparagraph III. A. and Part Four, Section One, subparagraph III. A.

C. **Surplus Employee** applies to CTAP only. Its definition is provided in Part Three, Section One, subparagraph III. B.

PART TWO--CAREER TRANSITION SERVICES

I. ELIGIBILITY

FSIS employees who are career or career-conditional or in the SES who are identified as surplus or displaced are entitled to services. Other employees may use the services, but surplus and displaced employees are given priority.

II. TYPES OF SERVICES

To the extent feasible, available services may include:

- A. Government job vacancy postings.
- B. Private-sector employment information.
- C. Career counseling.
- D. Skills assessment and job search preparation.
- E. Software for resume preparation.
- F. Relocation information.
- G. Access to computers, printers, copier and facsimile machines.
- H. The Employee Assistance Program. Professional counselors provide free, confidential assistance to employees on many issues. Employees may contact the Program directly for assistance on 1-800-523-5668.

III. ACCESS TO AND USE OF SERVICES

A. **Informing Employees.** SPO's provide surplus and displaced employees with information on the use of career transition services and how they are obtained. The Agency, USDA Career Management Resource Centers, and State Dislocated Workers Units provide career transition services.

B. **Point of Contact.** SPO's are the point of contact for surplus and displaced employees seeking local resource centers, unemployment services, employee assistance programs, counseling services and job placement services.

C. **Surplus and Displaced Employees with Disabilities.** SPO's make information available and provide contacts for Federal, State, or local resources to support career transition for persons with disabilities. SPO's provide printed materials in alternate formats on request. Employees may also contact FSIS's Disability Program Manager at (202) 720-5362 or TDD/TTY (202) 720-2442 for assistance.

D. **Use of Excused Absence.**

1. Surplus and displaced employees may request, orally or in writing, approval of excused absence to use career transition services.

2. Supervisors will authorize such employees with at least 40 hours of "on-the-clock" time, which is "01" Regular Time on the Time and Attendance Report. The 40 hours are cumulative and should be granted in increments. (**EXAMPLES:** Four hours to attend a workshop and three hours to work on a resume.) Supervisors should informally keep track of the hours granted.

3. Supervisors, at their discretion, may provide additional time as warranted by individual situations. Supervisors are encouraged to be flexible as the needs of the workplace permit, to allow surplus and displaced employees maximum time to participate in career transition activities.

E. **Use After Separation.** Separated employees may use career transition services for **up to 90 days following separation**. Access ends when the employee receives a career, career-conditional, or excepted-service appointment without time limit in any agency or 90 days after separation.

IV. **RETRAINING FOR ELIGIBLE EMPLOYEES**

A. Managers and supervisors, to the extent possible, are required to make every effort to retrain surplus and displaced employees:

1. For other occupations before hiring other candidates.

2. Who lack specialized knowledge in a specific program area but possess appropriate skills to perform the job. (**EXAMPLE:** A personnel management specialist would possess the skills necessary to fill a position as an EEO specialist.)

B. Selecting officials consult with the SPO to decide the feasibility of retraining surplus or displaced employees. **NOTE:** When retraining is a consideration, existing staffing procedures apply, especially if retraining could lead to a promotion.

C. Retraining is available through:

1. Career development.
2. Upward mobility.
3. Cross-training.
4. Rotational assignments.
5. Job restructuring.
6. Detail.

7. Placement through use of modified qualifications. Selecting officials should modify qualifications, when feasible, before announcing the position to ensure that displaced and surplus employees have an opportunity to qualify for the vacancy. Selecting officials consult with the SPO to decide the feasibility of modifying qualifications for surplus and displaced employees.

D. SPO's may contact the U.S. Department of Labor, State Dislocated Workers Units and local Private Industry Councils for information on retraining opportunities through the Job Training Partnership Act.

PART THREE--SPECIAL SELECTION PROVISIONS UNDER CTAP

Section One--Basic Provisions

I. POLICY

A. When filling an Agency vacancy, a well-qualified, surplus or displaced FSIS employee who meets eligibility under CTAP must be selected before another candidate from within or outside the Agency, unless doing so would result in another employee being separated under a RIF.

B. The Agency may not procure temporary help services under 5 CFR 300, subpart E, in lieu of appointing surplus or displaced Federal employees.

II. APPLICABILITY

Refer to Attachment 3-1 for items that are **exempt** from special selection priority.

III. DEFINITIONS

A. **Displaced Employee.** A current (i.e. still on Agency rolls):

1. Career or career-conditional competitive service USDA employee at grade GS-15 or equivalent and below, who has received a RIF separation notice or has declined a directed reassignment or transfer of function outside the local commuting area.

2. USDA employee in the excepted service, serving on an appointment without time limit, at grade GS-15 or equivalent and below, who has been given noncompetitive appointment eligibility and selection priority by statute for positions in the competitive service and who is in receipt of a RIF separation notice or has declined a transfer of function or directed reassignment outside the local commuting area.

B. **Surplus Employee.** A current (i.e. still on Agency rolls):

1. Career or career-conditional competitive service USDA employee, at grade GS-15 or equivalent and below, who has received a certificate of expected separation or other official certification issued by an Agency indicating that the position is surplus.

2. USDA employee on an excepted service appointment without time limit, at grade GS-15 or equivalent and below, who has been issued a certificate of expected separation or other official agency certification indicating that the position is surplus, and who has been conferred noncompetitive appointment eligibility and special selection priority by statute for positions in the competitive service.

C. **Other Terms.** Refer to Part One, Paragraph IX. for a complete list of all other definitions used in this directive.

IV. (RESERVED)

Section Two--Eligibility, Application Procedure, and Selection

V. ELIGIBILITY FOR SELECTION PRIORITY

A. **Requirements.** An individual must meet **all** the following conditions for special selection priority:

1. Meet the definition of displaced or surplus employee (See Section One, paragraph III.)
2. Have a current performance rating of record of at least Fully Successful or equivalent.
3. Apply for a vacancy that is at or below the grade level of, and without greater promotion potential than, the position from which the employee may be or is being separated.
4. Occupy a position in the same local commuting area of the vacancy.
5. File an application for a specific vacancy within the timeframes established by the Agency, and provide a proof of eligibility document. (See Subparagraph B.)
6. Be determined by the Agency to be well-qualified for the specific vacancy.

B. **Proof of Eligibility.** The following documents provide valid proof of eligibility for special selection priority:

1. RIF separation notice or notice of proposed removal for declining a directed reassignment or transfer of function outside the local commuting area.
2. Certificate of expected separation or other official notice from an agency stating that the employee is surplus or eligible for discontinued service retirement.
3. Other official agency certification identifying the employee as being in a surplus organization or occupation.

C. Period of Eligibility.

1. **Eligibility begins** on the date the proof of eligibility document is issued. (See Subparagraph B.)
2. **Eligibility ends** on whichever date is the earliest of the following:
 - a. RIF separation.
 - b. Employee's resignation.
 - c. Separation under adverse action procedures for declining a directed reassignment or transfer of function to another local commuting area.
 - d. Cancellation of a proof of eligibility document. (See Subparagraph B.)
 - e. Eligible employee's acceptance of a career, career-conditional or excepted service appointment (without time limit) in any agency at any grade level.

D. Eligibility Notification.

1. Each SPO establishes a method of tracking surplus and displaced employees and officially notifying each eligible employee in writing. The notification document must include:
 - a. The title, series, grade, geographic location, and full performance level of the employee's current position.

b. An SPO contact to verify current eligibility and to notify in the event the employee is selected for another position.

c. The signature of the SPO Personnel Officer.

2. SPO's inform the Director, HRD, when issuing notifications.

3. The SPO issues to the employee with the notification document, the following information, in writing:

a. Special selection priority provisions.

b. Procedures to apply for vacancies under CTAP and ICTAP.

c. Available career transition services and how employees may obtain them.

E. Eligibility Cancellation.

1. The Personnel Officer cancels the notification of eligibility when notified that the employee is now employed under conditions that make the employee ineligible for further special selection priority.

2. The SPO notifies the ineligible employee in writing of the cancellation and the basis for it.

3. Each SPO establishes a procedure for documenting the cancellation. (**EXAMPLE:** Letter obtaining ineligible employee's signature acknowledging receipt of the cancellation.)

VI. LOCATING AND APPLYING FOR VACANCIES

A. Locating Vacancies.

1. All announcements are posted in OPM's FJOB and state how eligible employees can apply, what proof of eligibility is required, and the Agency's definition of well-qualified.

2. Employees may locate vacancies posted in OPM's FJOB by accessing USAJobs as follows:

a. Via the Internet (address: <http://www.usajobs.opm.gov>).

- b. By dialing (912) 757-3100 (modem required).
- c. By calling (912) 757-3000.

3. Vacancies with an FSIS area of consideration are also posted in the Agency's printed Bi-Weekly Nationwide Listing. The listing is also available electronically in:

- a. **HPDesk**, in the electronic Library. Open the catalog entitled "Field Vacancies" or "HQ Vacancies."
- b. **Outlook**, in the Public Folder entitled "Personnel."

B. Open Continuous Vacancies.

1. Veterinary Medical Officer positions (GS-701-9 through 13) and entry-level Food Inspector positions (GS-1863-5 through 7) are filled on a frequent basis in locations nationwide. Individual positions are not announced since FSIS competition notices are posted in the OPM FJOB on an open continuous basis. The area of consideration includes CTAP and ICTAP eligibles. POB notifies the selecting offices of displaced or surplus applicants who get special selection priority for internal reassignment or merit promotion actions.

2. Compliance Officer positions (GS-1801-9 through 11) are currently being filled on a frequent basis in locations nationwide. An open continuous vacancy announcement is posted in the Agency's Bi-Weekly Nationwide Listing. The area of consideration includes CTAP eligibles.

C. **Application Procedure.** Eligible employees must apply directly to agencies for specific vacancies in the local commuting area within prescribed timeframes and attach appropriate proof of eligibility.

VII. SELECTION

A. Consideration of Candidates.

1. The area of consideration may be restricted to surplus and displaced FSIS employees in the local commuting area.

2. If two or more eligible surplus or displaced FSIS employees apply and are determined to be well-qualified, any of these employees can be selected.

3. If no eligible employees apply, or none are determined to be well-qualified, another FSIS employee or USDA employee in another agency can be selected.

B. Order of Selection for Filling Vacancies From Within USDA. The following order of selection applies to FSIS vacancies filled from within USDA:

1. FSIS surplus or displaced employees (within local commuting area).

2. FSIS employees (within local commuting area).

3. USDA surplus or displaced employees (within local commuting area).

4. Other FSIS employees (outside local commuting area) or USDA employees (either within or outside local commuting area). **NOTE:** The USDA RPL continues to be fully operational. RPL registrants may be considered before consideration of other USDA employees ineligible for special selection priority (5 CFR 330, Subpart B).

C. Referral of Applicants. The SPO refers applicants to the selecting official based on the order of selection in Subparagraph B. Only CTAP applicants who are well-qualified, are referred to the selecting official.

D. Qualification Review and Results.

1. The SPO is required to advise, in writing, surplus and displaced employees who apply for specific vacancies within their local commuting area of the results of their application, and whether or not they were found well-qualified.

2. If an applicant is found well-qualified, and another well-qualified surplus or displaced candidate is selected, the SPO notifies in writing, the applicant who was not selected.

3. If the applicant is not found well-qualified, the SPO notifies the applicant in writing. The notice must include information on the results of a documented, independent, second review conducted by the agency.

FSIS DIRECTIVE 4300.3
PART THREE

4. The SPO must conduct a documented, independent, second review when an otherwise eligible employee is determined to be not well-qualified. The SPO may receive assistance with the second review by consulting a subject-matter expert, an EEO official, or the selecting official (if not involved in the original determination).

5. The SPO refers disputes to the Personnel Officer for final determination.

EXEMPTIONS FROM SPECIAL SELECTION PRIORITY UNDER CTAP

The following actions are **EXEMPT** from special selection priority under CTAP:

1. Actions taken under 5 CFR 335, including reassignment, change to lower grade, or promotion, when no eligible employees under CTAP apply.
2. Reemployment of a former Agency employee exercising regulatory or statutory reemployment rights including the reemployment of injured workers who have either been restored to earning capacity by OWCP, or who have received a notice that their compensation benefits will cease because of recovery from the disabling injury or illness.
3. Position change resulting from disciplinary action.
4. Temporary appointment of under 121 days (including all extensions).
5. Exchange of positions (**EXAMPLE:** Job swap) between or among Agency employees, when the action involves no increase in grade or promotion potential.
6. Conversion of an Agency employee on an excepted-service appointment which confers eligibility for noncompetitive conversion into the competitive service.
7. An action taken under 5 CFR 351 (RIF).
8. Noncompetitive placement of an employee into a different position as a result of a formal reorganization, when the former position ceases to exist, and no actual vacancy results.
9. Assignment made under the Intergovernmental Personnel Act, as provided in 5 CFR 334.
10. Filling a position through an excepted-service appointment.
11. Details.
12. Time-limited promotions of under 121 days, including all extensions.
13. Noncompetitive movement of surplus or displaced employees within USDA and within the same local commuting area.
14. Movement of excepted-service employees within an agency.
15. Placement under 5 U.S.C. 8337 or 8451 to allow continued employment of an employee who has become unable to provide useful and efficient service in the current position because of a medical condition.

16. Placement that is a "reasonable offer" as defined in 5 U.S.C. 8336(d) and 8414(b).
17. Career ladder promotions or position changes resulting from reclassified actions
(**EXAMPLES:** Accretion of duties or application of a new position classification standard.)
18. Recall of seasonal or intermittent employees from nonpay status.
19. Internal placement of an injured or disabled worker whose agency has identified a position for which the individual can be reasonably accommodated.
20. Action taken by the agency head or designee pursuant to the settlement of a formal complaint, grievance, appeal, or other litigation.
21. Action taken to return an employee to the original or similar position during a supervisory probationary period.
22. Retention of individuals whose positions are brought into the competitive service under 5 CFR 316.701 or 316.702 and subsequent conversion, when applicable, under 5 CFR 315.701.
23. Retention of an employee for whom OPM has approved a rule 5.1 variation under 5 CFR 5.1.
24. The selection of an Agency employee within the local commuting area, after all eligible Agency surplus and displaced CTAP applicants within the local commuting area have been accorded selection priority. (**NOTE:** This exception allows the Agency to make internal selections, including reassignment of FSIS employees to other positions, where necessary, without being required to give selection priority to CTAP candidates from outside FSIS. If the SPO advertises a position with an area of consideration of FSIS local commuting area, only FSIS CTAPs within the local commuting area would receive special selection priority. USDA CTAPs would not receive special selection priority over FSIS employees who are not CTAP eligible. The SPO may advertise FSIS local commuting area without having to consider USDA CTAPs.)
25. Reemployment of a former agency employee who retired under a formal trial retirement and reemployment program, and who seeks reemployment with that agency under the program's provisions, and within the program's applicable time limits.
26. Extensions of temporary or term actions, up to the full period allowed, provided that the original action, on which the extension is based, was made on or before February 29, 1996; or for actions initially made after February 29, 1996, the original vacancy announcement must have specified that the position was open to CTAP candidates and that if they were found well-qualified, would be afforded selection priority. The original announcement must have stated that an extension was possible without further announcement. (**NOTE:** Conversion to permanent is exempt from CTAP as long as the vacancy announcement was open to CTAPs and stated it could become permanent.)
27. Noncompetitive movement of displaced employees between agencies as a result of a reorganization, transfer of function, or mass transfer.
28. Placement of a member of SES under 5 U.S.C. 3594.

PART FOUR--SPECIAL SELECTION PROVISIONS UNDER ICTAP

Section One--Basic Provisions

I. POLICY

ICTAP provides special selection priority for eligible displaced employees on an interagency basis. For the purposes of this directive, the term "interagency" refers to displaced employees applying for vacancies from Department to Department.

II. APPLICABILITY

A. **Applicable Items.** Special selection priority under ICTAP applies to the following actions:

1. Competitive appointments (**EXAMPLE:** from registers or delegated examining).

2. Noncompetitive appointments to the competitive service (**EXAMPLE:** The types listed in 5 CFR 315, 5 CFR 330 Subpart F, as well as Outstanding Scholar and Bilingual/Bicultural appointments made under the authority of the Luevano consent decree).

3. Movement between agencies (**EXAMPLE:** transfer), except as provided for in item number 8 of Attachment 4-1 or 5 CFR 351.

4. Reinstatements (except for former employees displaced from the agency).

5. Time limited competitive appointments of 121 days or more, including extensions, except as provided for in item number 11 of Attachment 4-1.

B. **Non-Applicable Items.** Refer to Attachment 4-1 for items that are exempt from special selection priority under ICTAP.

III. DEFINITIONS

A. Displaced Employee.

1. A current career or career-conditional competitive service employee at grade GS-15 or equivalent and below, who has received a specific RIF separation notice or a notice of proposed removal for declining a directed reassignment or transfer of function outside the local commuting area.

2. A former career or career-conditional employee:

a. In the competitive service at grade GS-15 or equivalent and below:

(1) Who was separated through a RIF or removed for declining a directed reassignment or transfer of function outside the local commuting area.

(2) Who was separated because of compensable injury or illness as provided under subchapter I of 5 U.S.C. Chapter 81, whose compensation has been terminated and whose former agency is unable to place the individual as required by 5 CFR 353.

b. In the competitive service who retired with a disability under sections 8337 or 8451 of Title 5 U.S.C. whose disability annuity has been or is being terminated.

c. In the competitive service at grade GS-15 or equivalent and below, who received a RIF separation notice and who retired on the effective date of the RIF or under the discontinued service retirement option.

3. A former Military Reserve Technician or National Guard Technician who is receiving a special disability retirement annuity from OPM under sections 8337(h) or 8456 of Title 5 U.S.C.

4. A current employee in the excepted service, serving on an appointment without time limit at grade GS-15 or equivalent and below, who has been given noncompetitive appointment eligibility and selection priority by statute for positions in the competitive service, and who is in receipt of a RIF separation notice or notice of proposed removal for declining a directed reassignment or transfer of function outside the local commuting area.

5. A former employee in the excepted service, who served on an appointment without time limit at grade GS-15 or equivalent and below, who has been given noncompetitive appointment eligibility and selection priority by statute for positions in the competitive service, and who has been separated through RIF or removed for declining a directed reassignment or transfer of function outside the local commuting area.

B. **Other Terms.** Refer to Part One, Paragraph IX. for a complete list of other terms and definitions used in this directive.

IV. (RESERVED)

Section Two--Eligibility, Application Procedure, and Selection

V. ELIGIBILITY FOR SELECTION PRIORITY

A. **Requirements.** An individual must meet **all** the following conditions for special selection priority:

1. Meet the ICTAP definition of displaced employee. (See Section One, paragraph III.)
2. Have a current (or a last) performance rating of record of at least Fully Successful or equivalent. **EXCEPTION:** Individuals eligible under items in Section One, subparagraphs III. A. 2. a. (2), III. A. 2. b. and III. A. 3.
3. Apply for a vacancy that is at or below the grade level of, and without greater promotion potential than, the position from which the employee has been or is being separated.
4. Occupy or have been displaced from a position in the same local commuting area of the vacancy.
5. File an application for a specific vacancy within the timeframes established by the Agency, and provide proof of eligibility.
6. Be determined by the Agency to be well-qualified for the specific position.

B. **Proof of Eligibility.** The following documents provide valid proof of eligibility for special selection priority:

1. RIF separation notice or notice of proposed removal for declining a directed reassignment or transfer of function outside of the local commuting area.
2. Documentation, such as an SF-50, showing that the employee was separated as a result of RIF or for declining a transfer of function or directed reassignment to another commuting area.
3. Official certification from the Agency certifying it cannot place an employee as required by 5 CFR 353 who was separated because of compensable injury or illness as provided under subchapter I of 5 U.S.C. Chapter 81 and as a result, whose compensation has been terminated.

4. Official notification from OPM that a former career or career-conditional employee in the competitive service, who retired with a disability under sections 8337 or 8451 of Title 5 U.S.C is losing or has lost a disability annuity.

5. Official notification from the Military Department or National Guard Bureau that a former Military Reserve Technician or National Guard Technician receiving a special disability retirement annuity from OPM, has retired under 5 U.S.C. 8337(h) or 8456.

C. Period of Eligibility.

1. **Eligibility begins** on the date the proof of eligibility document is issued. (See Subparagraph B.)

2. **Eligibility ends:**

a. One year after separation.

b. One year after an agency certifies that an individual under Section One, subparagraph III. A. 2. a. (2) cannot be placed.

c. One year after an individual under Section One, subparagraph III. A. 2. b. received notification that disability annuity has been or will be terminated.

d. When the employee receives a career, career-conditional, or excepted-service appointment without time limit in any agency, at any grade level.

e. When the employee no longer meets the eligibility requirements. (See requirements in Subparagraph A.)

D. Eligibility Notification and Cancellation. The process for notifying employees of eligibility and subsequent cancellation of eligibility under ICTAP is the same as CTAP. Refer to Part Three, Section Two, subparagraphs V. D. and V. E.

VI. LOCATING AND APPLYING FOR VACANCIES

The process for locating and applying for vacancies under ICTAP is the same as CTAP. Refer to Part Three, Section Two, subparagraph VI.

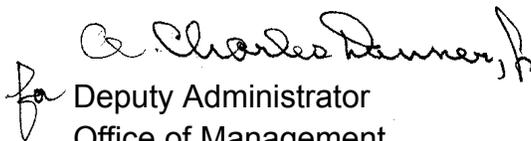
VII. SELECTION

A. **Consideration of Candidates.** The RPL must be checked before anyone can be selected from outside USDA. Special selection priority must be given to well-qualified, displaced ICTAP candidates who apply for vacancies within the local commuting area. (See Subparagraph B.) If two or more eligible candidates apply and are determined to be well-qualified, any of these candidates can be selected.

B. **Order of Selection for Filling Vacancies From Outside USDA.** The following order of selection applies to vacancies filled from outside USDA:

1. Follow order of selection for CTAP (See Part Three, Section Two, subparagraph VII. B.)
2. Current or former USDA employees on the RPL.
3. Former FSIS employees displaced from the agency.
4. Current or former Federal employees displaced from other Departments.
5. Any other candidate.

C. **Qualification Review and Results.** The qualification review and results process for ICTAP is the same as CTAP. Refer to Part Three, Section Two, subparagraph VII. C.


Deputy Administrator
Office of Management

EXEMPTIONS FROM SPECIAL SELECTION PRIORITY UNDER ICTAP

The following actions are **EXEMPT** from special selection priority under ICTAP:

1. Selection from FSIS or USDA CTAP, RPL, or other internal Agency movement of current Agency employees.
2. Appointment of 10-point veteran preference eligibles if reached through an appropriate appointing authority. Eligible employees include:
 - a. CP (10-point compensable disability preference).
 - b. CPS (10-point 30 percent compensable disability preference).
 - c. XP (10-point disability preference or 10-point derived preference).
3. Reemployment of former Agency employees who have regulatory or statutory reemployment rights including the reemployment of injured workers who have either been restored to earning capacity by OWCP, or who have received a notice that their compensation benefits will cease because of recovery from the disabling injury or illness.
4. Temporary appointment of under 121 days (including all extensions).
5. An action taken under RIF regulations (see 5 CFR 351).
6. Filling a position by excepted appointment.
7. Conversion of an employee of the same Agency who is serving on an excepted-service appointment which confers eligibility for noncompetitive conversion into the competitive service.
8. Noncompetitive movement of displaced employees between agencies as a result of reorganization, transfer of function, or mass transfer.
9. The reemployment of a former agency employee who retired under a formal trial retirement and reemployment program, and who seeks reemployment with that agency under the program's provisions, and within the program's applicable time limits.
10. An action taken by the agency head or designee pursuant to the settlement of a formal complaint, grievance, appeal, or other litigation.

11. Extensions of temporary or term actions, up to the full period allowed, provided that the original action, on which the extension is based, was made on or before February 29, 1996; or for actions initially made after February 29, 1996, the original vacancy announcement must have specified that the position was open to ICTAP candidates and that if they were found well-qualified, would be afforded selection priority. The original announcement must have stated that an extension was possible without further announcement. This includes extensions granted by OPM to the 2-year or 4-year limit allowed for temporary and term appointments, respectively.

12. The reappointment of former employees with their agency into hard-to-fill positions, the duties of which require unique skills and experience necessary to conduct a formal skills-based training program for the agency.

13. The retention of individuals whose positions are brought into the competitive service under 5 CFR 316.701 or 316.702 and subsequent conversion, when applicable under 5 CFR 315.701.

14. The retention of an employee for whom OPM has approved a rule 5.1 variation under 5 CFR 5.1.

15. The placement of a member of the SES under 5 U.S.C. 3594.

16. Assignments made under the Intergovernmental Personnel Act as provided in 5 CFR 334.