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HRDG 4511 - Section E - Accretion of Duties

Last Modified:

Subchapter 4511

Position Classification

Section E - Accretion of Duties

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Title 5, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 335.103 gives agencies the discretion to promote noncompetitively a position that is classified at a higher grade because of additional duties and responsibilities.

Introduction

The noncompetitive promotion can be processed if certain classification and staffing requirements are met, along with other requirements that ensure merit principles are upheld and other employees are not adversely impacted. Managers and supervisors are encouraged to consider position management objectives and exercise caution before initiating action.

Accretion of duties should occur infrequently if managers perform adequate position management. An alternative option might be to establish a realistic full performance level (FPL) before a position is filled. If a bridge position is needed for career development, managers and HR specialists can ensure that reasonable and accurate career ladders are established before a position is filled.

Supervisors are responsible for the duties performed by their employees, and should exercise caution when changes result in the unintentional growth or erosion of assignments that may affect the grade level of positions. It's important to manage Government resources efficiently. Generally, it is more cost effective to assign the higher level work to the fewest number of positions needed to accomplish the work of the organization, and not spread out to support higher grades for more employees.

**Position
Management
Considerations**

Supervisors should be sensitive to situations where accretion requests would affect other employees at similar grade levels who would also be eligible for the higher grade if the position was announced:

- Accretions should not be used to promote employees that were given additional training or other developmental opportunities, when similar opportunities were not made available to other employees in the supervisory unit.
- All employees in common organizational units that are eligible for the higher graded position should be given fair consideration and evaluated on their relative ability.

The assignment of a limited amount of higher-graded work (generally, this should not exceed 20 percent of the direct work time) to lower-graded employees for developmental purposes is an accepted management practice. Typically, this provides lower-graded employees with an opportunity to demonstrate the potential to perform work at the higher level.

OPM and the Merit Systems Protection Board recognize that accretion promotions can be utilized. Both, however, caution that misuse undermines the trust employees have in the merit promotion process, which may lead to increased complaints or grievances. It may be more appropriate for management to view an "evolved" position as a new position, and announce and fill it competitively through Merit Promotion.

Precautions

Promotion resulting from additional duties and responsibilities does not include a conscious alteration of duties and responsibilities assigned to a position by the manager. This is outside the general scope of the existing position (planned management action), which may result in a reclassification of the job to a higher grade level. Such actions should be subject to merit promotion procedures and discussed with the classification specialist before taking any action.

In consideration of the above mentioned guidance, if management believes a position has changed to warrant an accretion of duties, the employee may be noncompetitively promoted when all of the following requirements are met (Department Regulation [DR 4020-551-001](#)):

Approving Accretions

- The major duties/basic functions of the current position are absorbed into the new position.
- The current position must be abolished.
- The new position does not have any promotion potential beyond its accreted level.
- The new duties are grade controlling, regular and recurring, and performed at least 25% of the employee's work time.
- The addition of higher level duties and responsibilities must not result in the abolishment of another position, reduce the known promotion potential of another position, or adversely impact another occupied position.
- No other employee(s) in the same organizational unit may be performing similar duties prior to the addition of the new duties and responsibilities which precipitated a promotion based on accretion of duties.
- The employee meets time-in-grade and qualifications standards.

The following actions cannot be considered for a promotion based on accretion of duties:

- Promotion from a one-grade interval to a two-grade interval position.
- Promotion from one occupational series to another occupational series.
- Movement to a vacant, higher level position.
- Promotion from an identical/additional position within the same organization.
- Promotion from a nonsupervisory position to a supervisory position.
- Promotion from a nonleader position to a leader position.
- Accretion of duties across organizational lines.

The table below summarizes the steps involved in accretion approvals:

Step:	Who:	Action:
1	Supervisor	Prepares an updated PD and submits it, along with a narrative justification for the accretion to the Servicing Classification Specialist. Consults with the staffing specialist to determine if the requirements outlined in USDA DR 4020-551-001 are met. If requirements are not met, conveys information to the supervisor on why the accretion cannot be processed. If requirements are initially met, reviews the position description and conducts a position audit. If the classification decision supports the higher grade, requests and receives a signed AD-332 PD Cover Sheet and Accretion of Duties Form from the supervisor: The classification and staffing specialist sign the Accretion of Duties Form, which is forwarded to the HRD Operations and Policy Director, along with related supplementary information (PDs, AD-332, audit, etc.).
2	Classification Specialist	Reviews and forwards Accretion of Duties Form along with supplementary information to the MRP HRD Director for signature. If approved, forwards the signed form to the classification and staffing specialist. Requests a promotion SF-52 from the supervisor.
3	HRD Operations and Policy Director	Reviews and forwards Accretion of Duties Form along with supplementary information to the MRP HRD Director for signature. If approved, forwards the signed form to the classification and staffing specialist. Requests a promotion SF-52 from the supervisor.
4	Classification Specialist	Requests a promotion SF-52 from the supervisor.

Approval Steps

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