

Fact Sheet

Critical Hire Authority

General Information

The purpose of a Critical Hire appointment is to provide an avenue to quickly fill a position for which a critical hiring need exists without having to post a vacancy announcement or go through a lengthy selection process. This authority can be used for both short-term positions and continuing positions that an organization must fill on an interim basis pending completion of competitive examining, clearances, or other procedures required for a longer appointment. The hiring manager must submit a justification that explains the criticality of the situation that supports the use of this hiring authority.

Some examples of appropriate use of this authority may include: occurrence of a natural disaster that requires additional work force to collect or analyze data on a short-term basis; current subject matter expert is out on extended sick leave and there are no other staff with the knowledge or skill needed to accomplish a time sensitive project; to fill a critical need temporarily while working through the competitive process to make a permanent selection, etc.

Eligibility Requirements

In order to be eligible for a Critical Hire appointment, an individual must meet the following requirements:

- Be a US citizen; and
- Meet OPM's qualification requirements for the classified position to which he/she will be appointed.

Appointment Options

Critical Hire Appointments are filled as temporary excepted service appointments under Schedule A, section 213.3102(i)(2). Appointments under this authority may not exceed 30 days and may be extended for up to an additional 30 days if continued employment is essential to the organization's operations. A critical hire appointment may not be used to extend the service limit of any other appointing authority. An organization may not employ the same individual under this authority for more than 60 days in any 12-month period.

While under this appointment, the appointee:

- Does not acquire eligibility for non-competitive conversion to a permanent position;
- Will not be eligible for promotion, detail, change to lower grade, or reassignment to another geographic location; and
- May be terminated at any time for a legitimate management reason (not related to adverse actions).

Requirements for Considering Displaced/Surplus Employees

Provisions of the Career Transition Assistance Plan (CTAP)/Interagency Career Transition

Assistance Plan (ICTAP) do not apply to an excepted service appointment (reference 5 CFR 330.609(i) and 330.707(g)).

Probationary/Trial Period Requirements

Temporary appointees under a Critical Hire Appointment do not serve a probationary or trial period.