



UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT
Washington, DC 20415

The Director

September 29, 2023

Memorandum for Heads of Departments and Agencies

From: Kiran A. Ahuja
Director

Subject: Extension and Amendment of the Government-wide Direct Hire
Appointing Authorities

The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) is authorizing an interim extension to the governmentwide direct hire authorities (DHA) for Scientific, Technical, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) positions, Acquisitions, as well as Cybersecurity and related positions where we identified severe shortages of candidates and/or critical hiring needs. OPM issued DHA for the positions below on October 11, 2018, for the improvement of workforce planning enabling simple and strategic hiring to attract top talent. In addition, OPM is amending the authority by adding two occupational series, data science (GS-1560) and operations research (GS-1515), as depicted below, to support agency efforts to expand artificial intelligence capabilities in the Federal government.

This authority expires 1 year from the date of this memorandum or until OPM terminates this authority, whichever occurs first. OPM will use this time to explore additional modifications to the authority so that agencies can continue to address their most pressing hiring needs.

Covered Positions – Scientific, Technical, Engineering, Mathematics (STEM)

Position Title	Occupational Series	Grade Levels
Economist	GS-0110	11-15
Biological Science	GS-0401	11-15
Fishery Biologist	GS-0482	11-15
General Engineer	GS-0801	11-15

Position Title	Occupational Series	Grade Levels
Civil Engineer	GS-0810	11-15
Physical Sciences	GS-1301, 1306, 1310, 1320 only	11-15
Actuary	GS-1510	11-15
Operations Research	GS-1515	11-15
Mathematics	GS-1520	11-15
Mathematical Statistician and Statistician	GS-1529, 1530	11-15
Data Science	GS-1560	11-15

Covered Positions – Acquisitions

Position Title	Occupational Series	Grade Levels
Acquisitions	GS-1102	11-15

Covered Positions – Cybersecurity and Related

Position Title	Occupational Series	Grade Levels
Computer Engineers (Cybersecurity)	GS-0854	12-15

Position Title	Occupational Series	Grade Levels
Computer Scientists (Cybersecurity)	GS-1550	12-15
Electronics Engineers (Cybersecurity)	GS-0855	12-15
*IT Cybersecurity Specialist	GS-2210	12-15

*These positions must require IT knowledge and IT competencies, the work must be coded to include cybersecurity functions supported by the job codes in the [Guide to Data Standards](#) and the [NICE Cybersecurity Workforce Framework, 2017](#), and cybersecurity work must be performed the majority of the time.

Using These Direct Hire Authorities

Effective immediately, agencies may appoint individuals into the occupations identified above at the specified grade levels (or equivalent) nationwide. Individuals may be appointed to competitive service career, career-conditional, term, or temporary positions, as appropriate, without regard to provisions of 5 U.S.C. 3309-3318 or 5 CFR part 211 and part 337, subpart A. These appointments are subject to public notice requirements in 5 U.S.C. 3327 and 3330 and 5 CFR 330, as well as procedures in 5 CFR part 330 pertaining to candidates' eligible for priority selection, and requirements in 5 CFR 332.402. Agencies must comply with all relevant laws to the extent that the agency or component is not exempted from such laws pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3304(a)(3).

In accordance with 5 CFR 337.206(c), OPM may request information from agencies on their use of these direct hire authorities. OPM will periodically assess agency use of these authorities as well as the continued need for them and may modify or terminate them as appropriate.

Agencies are required to request an applicable pre-employment background investigation at the appropriate tier to establish whether candidates are suitable for Federal employment. Candidates may be credentialed in accordance with Government-wide credentialing standards and can hold a position that is national security sensitive (including but not limited to those requiring eligibility for access to classified information) at the appropriate level (if required for the particular position).

Agencies must identify and use proper assessment tools for the positions being filled with these direct hire authorities to determine who is qualified for the covered positions. Agencies should not conduct additional rating to determine relative degrees of qualifications when using this authority. Agencies should assess applicants in the order in which the applications were received and select any qualified applicant in an order that approximates order of receipt. Qualified candidates with veterans' preference should be selected as they are found, just as any qualified non-preference eligible candidate would be.

Documenting Appointments on the SF-50 “Notification of Personnel Action”

When using a government-wide authority, an agency must enter the authority code “**AYM**” on the SF-50 in item 5-C **and** the relevant secondary authority code specified below for item 5-E of the SF-50.

STEM and Acquisitions positions:

Authority code to be cited: **BAH: GW-007**

Cybersecurity and related positions:

Authority code to be cited: **BAI: GW-008**

If you have any questions, please email Darlene.Phelps@opm.gov.

cc: Chief Human Capital Officers

*OPM has documented its findings in relation to these positions in its files and will maintain the documentation for the duration of the authorities.