

PRESIDENTIAL MANAGEMENT FELLOWS (PMF) PROGRAM

VETERANS' PREFERENCE PROCEDURES

Background:

During the PMF process, veterans receive 3-tiered consideration. The first occurs during the nomination process. The second occurs during the OPM application review and rating process and the third occurs during the agency appointment process. The PMF Program Office's veterans' preference policy stems from 5 CFR 302.401 and 5 CFR 362.

First (Nomination Process):

Colleges and universities that participate in the PMF Program must establish a competitive nomination process to ensure that all interested applicants who meet the established criteria receive careful and thorough review and equal opportunity for nomination. Schools must nominate all students eligible for veterans' preference who apply for nomination and are found qualified.

Second (OPM Application Review and Rating Process):

OPM rates and ranks PMF candidates based on an additional assessment center process. Veterans' preference is adjudicated by OPM based on the information (e.g., DD-214, SF 15, or documentation from the Department of Veterans Affairs) supplied by PMF candidates. Five or ten points are added to the scores of those candidates entitled to veterans' preference. As applicable, certain veteran categories automatically float to the top regardless of their scores. From this list OPM designates the top candidates to become PMF Finalists.

OPM will post the Finalists names and resumes on the PMF webpage for agencies interested in hiring PMFs. The Finalist list is alphabetical (unranked order). The Finalists resumes are annotated to identify the veterans and the type of veterans' preference (TP, XP, XPP, CP, and CPS) that the Finalist is entitled to.

Third (Agency Appointment Process):

Agencies are required to select from the highest available preference category if at least 3 veterans' preference candidates remain in that group. The only way a veteran may be removed from consideration is if it can be demonstrated that he or she does not qualify for the vacancy. When fewer than 3 remain in the highest category, consideration may be expanded to include the next category. Under this method, *first* consideration is to preference eligibles having a service-connected disability of 10% or more. *Second* consideration is to other 10-point preference eligibles, and *third* consideration is to 5-point preference eligibles. *Last* consideration is to nonpreference eligibles. These preference categories are annotated on the top of the Finalists resumes.

If a veteran, who is a PMF Finalist, *expresses an interest* in working for an agency, that agency must apply 5 CFR part 302 when selecting and appointing candidates. *Expresses an interest* means the veteran contacts the agency in person or by phone and asks for consideration for appointment for a *specific position*. This can be as simple as dropping off a resume at the Job Fair, sending it by mail or delivering it in person at any of the agency offices that are considering the appointment of a PMF Finalist. Also, it can be as formal as sending a letter to the agency asking for consideration.

It does not mean that the agency has to contact each veteran on the Finalist list before offering a job to any Finalist, but it does mean that if a veteran *expresses an interest* for a specific position in an agency, as stated above, the agency must apply 5 CFR part 302. If a veteran never contacts the agency or vice-versa, then the agency has no veterans in their applicant pool.

Agencies who hire PMFs usually send hiring officials from their various agency components to the annual PMF Job Fair. At the same time, PMF Finalists may initiate contact with agencies. The applicant pool is individual. That is, it consists of whomever the agency contacts or whoever contacts the agency about obtaining a position. Since hiring officials from the various agency components hire PMFs, the applicant pools may remain individual down to the lowest organizational level, or even down to the position level.

If the agency decides not to hire the veterans with whom they come in contact, then the agency **must** prepare a written justification as to why the veteran did not meet the criteria for the position (usually your target position at the GS-9 level). Justifications are informal, however they should be qualifications driven and written with the expectation that the individual that was passed over may request to review the written justification. The justification accomplishes two objectives. Veterans are entitled, upon request, to obtain a copy of the reasons they were passed over in favor of a non-veteran for the position they were interested in obtaining. Additionally, if OPM officials audit agency PMF processes, the justification serves as written documentation that veterans, who were part of the agency applicant pool, received proper consideration.

Once a job offer is extended and accepted (an Entry On Duty (EOD) date established), that applicant pool is final. Veterans who request consideration after a job offer is extended and accepted will become part of a new applicant pool that will be established if/when new position(s) become available.

If you have further questions please contact the PMF Program Office at (202) 606-1040 or email us at PMF@OPM.GOV. You may also want to review the PMF Resource Manual found under program guidance on the Program Policy page of our webpage (<http://www.pmf.opm.gov>).