

BPA Human Resources Directive 410-01

Managing Positions, Organizations and Workforce Restructuring

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1. Purpose & Background

Communicates BPA-wide guidance for managing positions, organizations and workforce restructuring as permitted by Government-wide regulations and Department of Energy Order (DOE O) 320.1, "Acquiring and Positioning Human Resources."

2. Policy Owner

The Chief Administrative Officer, through Human Capital Management's (HCM) Integrated Strategy (NHI-1), has overall responsibility for monitoring, reporting, executing, and maintaining this BPA HR Directive.

3. Applicability

Except where noted, this BPA HR Directive applies to all BPA General Schedule (GS) and hourly employees.

4. Terms & Definitions

- A. **Career Transition Assistance/Financial Planning Assistance:** A combination of BPA resources and contracted services which may include, but are not limited to, individual career counseling, Employee Assistance Program (EAP) counseling, group workshops, job market research, career goal setting, resume writing, interviewing techniques, job search assistance (employer lists, secretarial service, resume preparation), group financial planning sessions and/or workshops, and individual financial planning training sessions and/or consultations.
- B. **Projected Positions:** Positions that are classified when an organization is newly established or an existing organization is assigned major new projects, functions, or responsibilities and management must anticipate what duties will be assigned to various positions.

5. Policy

HCM policies and programs support mission accomplishment and are effective, efficient, and compliant with Federal laws and regulation. HCM programs and practices link to organizational business strategy and mission while aligning employee and business needs, and observing employee rights. This BPA HR Directive addresses the following topics:

- A. Position classification
- B. Job standards for hourly positions
- C. Organization changes
- D. Reduction in Force (RIF); and

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E. Career transition and financial planning assistance

6. Responsibilities

As stated in applicable HR Desk References and/or Standard Operating Procedures (see “Related HR Desk References” section).

7. Standards & Procedures

7.1. Position Classification

- A. This BPA HR Directive applies to all annual positions at or below the GS-15 grade level or equivalent. It does not apply to hourly employees, experts or consultants, or to positions above the GS-15 grade level such as those in the Senior Executive Service (SES).
- B. Immediate supervisors, including those who are in an acting capacity for at least sixty days, are responsible for preparing accurate position descriptions and certifying the duties in the position descriptions are accurate and meet the Office of Personnel Management’s (OPM) position description minimum standard of adequacy.
- C. Human Resources Specialists with delegated position classification authority determine whether the position description is adequate for evaluation, ascertain its accuracy, and apply correct federal regulations, standards, references, and guides to ensure proper classification.
- D. It is advisable to obtain the opinions and comments of affected employees to the extent possible when a manager prepares a position description. Employee input into a position description is required under the BPA-Professional Division Laborers’ International Union of North America – Local 335 (PDL) bargaining agreement when the duties in a position description are modified for a PDL bargaining unit employee’s existing position, except for reorganization actions.
- E. Certification of the duties in a position description by a higher-level supervisor is mandatory in the absence of an immediate supervisor and may not be re-delegated.
- F. Desk audits or supervisory audits of the classification of all “projected positions” are required within 180 days of incumbency when there is a question about whether the anticipated, “projected” duties have materialized in the work of the position.
- G. Guidance related to “accretion of duties” promotions is found in DOE Policy Memorandum #05, Accretion-of-Duties and in BPA HR Directive and guidance on merit promotion.
- H. Evaluation statements must be prepared in the following instances:
 - 1. A classification decision is formally appealed within BPA, DOE, or to OPM;

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2. A proposed classification requires approval outside of BPA;
 3. A classification advisory opinion is being requested from BPA by OPM or other entity outside of BPA with authority to make such a request;
 4. A single classification affects a large block of BPA positions, i.e., five or more positions;
 5. The classification decision is one that (a) a prudent journeyman classifier would regard as likely to set a precedent; (b) would not be readily apparent to another classifier; (c) is borderline as to grade, series, or pay plan; or (d) there is good reason to believe the decision may be questioned later;
 6. The classified grade level is based on the incumbent’s “impact on the position”; and
 7. For all full-performance level position descriptions and, at least, every other grade level below the full-performance level in a career ladder.
- I. When a classification decision is appealed to BPA by an employee, the classification is then reviewed by a HR Specialist other than the one who made the original decision.
 - J. All identified classification errors must be corrected by the beginning of the fourth pay period from the date the error is determined.
 - K. Vacant positions identified for downgrading or upgrading because of classification error, receipt of new standards, or action taken by authority outside of BPA may not be refilled prior to correcting the classification error.
 - L. The Human Resources Director (HRD) or his/her delegate has authority to classify positions, except for the HRD position, by assigning an appropriate pay plan, title, series, and grade to each position.
 - M. The HRD and or his/her delegate may perform an employee or supervisory desk audit on any GS position at BPA as part of a cyclical review or where there is a need to determine the actual duties of the position.
 - N. Supervisors/Managers assign duties to positions, ensuring that position structures are consistent with principles of sound position management and certify their accuracy.
 - O. Final agency appeal authority is with the Department of Energy.

7.2. Job Standards for Hourly Employees

BPA’s Labor Relations staff consults with the appropriate bargaining unit when job standards for hourly employees are developed or changed.

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7.3. Organizational Changes

- A. BPA managers are permitted to make organizational changes only when there is a clear, justifiable return on investment of ratepayer dollars, e.g., financial, cost avoidance, efficiency, and compliance and when the change:
 - 1. Will improve efficiency, effectiveness, or collaboration;
 - 2. Will improve the ability to meet business requirements;
 - 3. Is necessary to meet regulatory requirements; or
 - 4. Better aligns the organization to DOE’s and/or BPA’s mission and strategic objectives.
- B. The effective date of any organizational personnel change should be the first day of the first pay period that will end in the new quarter.
- C. Reorganizations that involve one business unit require coordination with the unit’s Strategic Business Partner, HCM’s Labor Relations Manager, HCM’s Staffing Division Manager, and BPA’s Human Resources Director. The unit’s Vice President and Senior Vice President approve a unit’s reorganization.
- D. Reorganizations that involve two or more business units require approval by the Chief Operating Officer (COO).

7.4. Reduction in Force (RIF)

- A. Before formal RIF procedures are initiated, a strong effort is made to place employees who will be adversely affected. Adversely affected employees are informed at the earliest possible time and advised of the regulations under which RIF actions are taken and of their rights and benefits, if a RIF becomes necessary.
- B. HCM must establish or review, and publish a list of the BPA competitive areas annually.
- C. Employees receive additional service credit for performance based on the average of their last three annual performance ratings of record received during the four year period prior to the date BPA issues a RIF notice or the date BPA freezes ratings, whichever is earlier.
- D. When all employees in the RIF competitive area have received ratings of record under a single pattern of summary levels, the additional service credit for performance will be calculated as described in federal regulations (5 CFR 351.504) using the following:
 - 1. Twenty years for ratings of “Significantly Exceeds Expectations” (SE);
 - 2. Sixteen years for ratings of “Exceeds Expectations” (EE); and
 - 3. Twelve years for ratings of “Meets Expectations” (ME).

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- E. When multiple summary rating patterns are involved in a RIF competitive area, a separate determination about additional service credit based on performance will be made at that time, which will provide the most equitable treatment for affected employees.
- F. When employees in the same retention subgroup have identical adjusted service computation dates and are tied for release from a competitive level, the employee with the least amount of service with DOE will be released first.
- G. In the event an employee’s right of assignment can be satisfied only by assignment to a sensitive position, the assignment cannot be delayed or denied because the employee does not have an appropriate security clearance. Until such time as the appropriate clearance is obtained, the employee may be (a) assigned to perform only the non-sensitive duties of the position; (b) detailed to a non-sensitive position or set of duties; (c) granted leave (only upon the employee’s request); or (d) suspended under Executive Order 10450, if appropriate.
- H. The Administrator and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) determines when a RIF is necessary and which functions and organizations are affected, and determines when a functional transfer is needed to facilitate the furtherance of BPA’s mission.

7.5. Career Transition Assistance and Financial Planning Assistance

- A. **Career Transition Assistance Services:** Employees subject to involuntary separation due to a RIF, e.g., displaced or surplus employees are eligible for services under the DOE Career Transition Assistance Plan (CTAP) as described in DOE O 320.1, which includes Employee Assistance Program (EAP) counseling. BPA provides the following when approved by the employee’s manager:
 - 1. Approved employees are authorized up to \$1,600 of services at BPA’s expense until their separation date. Employees may only receive this assistance once during their BPA career; and
 - 2. Authorized employees may spend up to 120 hours of duty time to use career transition assistance.
- B. **Financial Planning Assistance:** Employees subject to involuntary separation as a result of transfer of function are eligible to receive this assistance after receiving management authorization:
 - 1. The service provider(s) and specific services are determined by BPA;
 - 2. Employees participate through attendance at BPA-sponsored financial planning sessions and/or individual assistance sessions/consultations not-to-exceed \$600 in value.

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3. In certain limited circumstances such as remote locations, limited availability of vendors, or lack of competitive rates, costs in excess of \$600 per employee or the use of other vendors may be authorized; and
 4. An eligible employee who has received authorization for financial planning assistance may spend up to 40 hours of duty time to utilize such services.
- C. Travel time in excess of one hour each day to access career transition assistance or financial planning assistance will not count towards the allotted hours for such services.
 - D. Employees authorized for career transition assistance or financial planning assistance services may use BPA computer equipment, phones and workspace to support activities for these services. Such support is limited to the period during which an employee is authorized to use career transition assistance or financial planning assistance services.
 - E. Supervisors/Managers authorize an employee to use career transition assistance or financial planning assistance services as a benefit of employment where employees are eligible.

8. Authorities & References

- A. 5 U.S.C. 3502, Order of Retention
- B. 5 U.S.C. 3503, Transfer of Functions
- C. 5 U.S.C. Chapter 51, Classification
- D. 5 CFR Part 330, Recruitment, Selection, and Placement, Subpart F – Agency Career Transition Assistance Plan (CTAP)
- E. 5 CFR Part 351, Reduction in Force
- F. 5 CFR Part 511, Classification under the General Schedule
- G. DOE O 320.1, Acquiring and Positioning Human Resources, Chapter IV – Reduction in Force, Chapter VI – DOE Career Transition Assistance Plan, and Chapter VII – Position Classification
- H. DOE Policy Guidance Memorandum #05, Accretion-of-Duties
- I. **Additional Resources:**
 1. DOE O 320.1, Acquiring and Positioning Human Resources:
 - a. Chapter IV – Reduction in Force;
 - b. Chapter VI – DOE Career Transition Assistance Plan; and
 - c. Chapter VII – Position Classification
 2. Related HR Desk References:

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- a. 410-03-02: Merit Promotion Plan for Annual Positions

9. Revision History

This chart contains a history of the revisions and reviews made to this document.

Version Number	Issue Date	Brief Description of Change/Review
1.0	1/19/2016	Initial publication.
2.0	4/18/2016	Style, formatting, and grammar changes

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