

BPA Human Resources Directive 410-11

Position Authorization Management

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1. Purpose

Establish position authorization management policy in support of Bonneville Power Administration's commitment to managing federal positions within budgetary constraints while also balancing mission needs with economy and efficiency of operations.

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

Provisions of this document, except where noted, apply to the ability to track and report position status of all federal positions within BPA General Schedule (GS) or equivalent hourly.

4. Terms & Definitions

TERMS DESCRIBING THE TYPES OF POSITIONS

- A. **Authorized/Authorization:** Permanent allocation. The number of positions an organization is permitted to maintain.
- B. **Excess:** Encumbered position that is neither authorized nor temporary authorized; typically resulting from initial allocation or major workforce restructuring efforts.
- C. **Temporary Authorized/ Temporary Authorization:** Temporary allocation. Limited by a predetermined period of time or other event, typically used for surge or temporary work, or temporary overage due to succession planning or student hires.

TERMS REGARDING HOW PEOPLE ARE CONNECTED TO THE POSITIONS

- D. **Assigned:** Reporting to and working for a workgroup, regardless of duration of the assignment (includes permanent placements, temporary & TERM appointments, detailed or temporarily promoted employees).
- E. **Obligated to:** Designation on a position that indicates it is the position of record for an employee, who may or may not be currently assigned to that position.
- F. **Vacancy:** Unencumbered allocations. Authorized or temporary authorized positions with nobody assigned.

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GENERAL TERMS

- G. **Position Management:** The continuous and systematic process of ensuring that organizations and positions are structured efficiently and within approved resource levels.
- H. **Position Strength:** Percentage describing the total number of personnel assigned vs the total number of authorized positions for an organization.
- I. **Requirement:** The baseline effort required to do the work of an organization without consideration for any constraints such as budget, work prioritization, etc.

5. Responsibilities

- A. **BPA Administrator:** Approve Tier I and overall BPA position authorization levels.
- B. **Tier I and II Leaders:** Approve position authorization levels and movement within their respective organizations.
- C. **BPA Human Resources Service Center Director or designee:** Manage position authorization process; advise executives and managers; conduct biennial requirements review and make recommendations; maintain position authorization records; review and approval, as appropriate, of requests from the Supplemental Labor Management Office (SLMO) to hire as supplemental labor versus Federal employee.
- D. **BPA Workforce Strategy Committee (in Executive Session):** Monitor position strength; execution of labor dollars versus budget and authorization allocation; approve temporary and permanent authorized positions beyond Tier I allocation.
- E. **BPA Managers and Supervisors:** Monitor position management roster; follow position authorization management processes when taking position-related actions; proactively plan toward achievement of allocated staffing level.

6. Initial Position Authorizations

- A. Initial position authorizations are informed by the results of the completion and subsequent analysis of the 2019 comprehensive workforce studies.
- B. The initial position authorizations at the Tier I level are approved by the BPA Administrator or designee.
- C. Tier I leaders approve initial position authorizations for all their subordinate organizations.

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7. Biennial Requirements Review

- A. Every two calendar years, on odd numbered years, the Human Resources Service Center leads a requirements review with BPA organizations to assess changes that have occurred since the initial position authorization or last review cycle that may necessitate authorization adjustments. Factors reviewed include, but are not limited to, mission changes, changes in work methodology, and new information regarding work effort.
- B. In collaboration with senior executives, the Human Resources Service Center makes authorization adjustment recommendations, no later than May 31st of the review year.
- C. Positions authorization adjustments at the Tier I level require approval by the Administrator or designee.
- D. Tier I leaders' approval is required for position authorization adjustments for all of their subordinate organizations.
- E. Adjustments are effective in HRMIS October 1st of the review year, along with a transition plan facilitated by the Human Resources Service Center regarding how to administer personnel actions associated with the changes.

8. Position Authorization Changes

- A. Position authorization changes include the following types of actions **that occur during the interim period between biennial requirement reviews** (note: a position change is independent of an associated personnel action, which is processed using Federal personnel processing guidelines):
 - 1. Position move – the movement of a position's work, along with its authorization, from one workgroup to another
 - 2. Position establishment – adding a new authorization or temporary authorization
 - 3. Position elimination – removing an authorization or temporary authorization
- B. Position authorization change requests and approvals are documented through HRMIS with a Position Authorization Change Request.
- C. Position authorization change approval levels
 - 1. Position authorization changes within a Tier II organization that do not result in an increase in the Tier II authorization total (including temporary authorizations), require approval by the Tier II leader or designee.

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2. Position authorization changes across Tier II organizations within the same Tier I organization that do not result in an increase in the Tier I authorization total (including temporary authorizations), require approval by the Tier I leader or designee.
3. Position authorization changes across Tier I organizations that do not result in an increase in the overall BPA authorizations total (including temporary authorizations) require approval of the gaining and losing Tier I leader or his/her designee.
4. Position authorization changes that result in an increase in a Tier I authorization total (including temporary authorizations) require approval of the Workforce Strategy Committee (Executive Session).
5. Position authorization changes that result in an increase in the overall BPA authorization total (excluding temporary authorizations) require concurrence of the Workforce Strategy Committee (Executive Session) and approval of the Administrator or designee.

9. Differences between “Authorized” and “Temporary Authorized”

- A. Both “authorized” and “temporary authorized” are types of authorized position, with the distinction being that “temporary authorized” positions are for either a set period of time or until a specific event occurs. Typical uses of temporary authorized positions include surge workload, overlap as part of succession planning, student hiring, etc.
- B. An employee of any appointment or assignment type (i.e., permanent, TERM, temporary, detailed) can be assigned against either type of authorized position; however, prior to assigning a permanent employee to a temporary authorized position, the manager, in consultation with the Human Resources Service Center, must have a plan of resolution as to the projected disposition of the permanent employee when the approval of the temporary authorization expires (e.g., projected retirements, end of surge work, etc.).

10. Assigned and Obligated

- A. **What is assigned?** Employees who report to and work for an organization are “assigned” to that organization. All employees must be assigned against a position (all positions have a unique position number), whether that position is authorized, temporary authorized or excess.

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- B. **What is “obligated to”?** This term refers to an employee’s position of record. When an employee is assigned to their position of record, both the assigned and obligated is the same. However, if that employee is temporarily assigned to another position the employee’s position of record is still obligated to them, and the assigned and obligated positions are different.

EXAMPLE: When an employee is detailed from one position (e.g., *Position A*) to another position (e.g., *Position B*), then they are “assigned” to *Position B* (that is where they report to work) but their position of record is still *Position A*. Thus, *Position A* is “obligated to” that employee.

- C. **What is the impact of a position that is “obligated to” an employee.** Managers may assign an employee to a position that is vacant, even if that position is obligated to another employee.
1. If assigning an employee on a temporary basis (e.g., detail, temporary promotion, temporary or TERM appointment, etc.) to an obligated position, then that temporary assignment should end if the “obligated to” employee returns.
 2. If assigning an employee on a permanent basis to an obligated position, the manager should work with the Human Resources Service Center in developing a plan of resolution for when/if the “obligated to” employee returns.

11. Excess Positions

- A. Positions with an employee assigned for which there is no authorization (either permanent or temporary authorized) are designated as “excess.” New excess positions are created only in limited situations:
1. At the outset of establishing position authorization management with the initial authorizations;
 2. As the result of significant workforce structuring activities (e.g., major reorganizations, reductions-in-force, workgroup eliminations, etc.);
 3. Rare, specific management directed actions necessitated by legal or regulatory action (e.g., priority placements) when those placements cannot be made with a permanent or temporary authorization.
- B. The “excess” designation on a position describes the position itself; it does not indicate that the particular employee assigned to it is excess.
- C. When a workgroup with any positions designated as excess reduces its number of assigned employees (i.e., an employee departs), then the excess position is removed.

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1. If the employee who departed was assigned to the excess position, the employee's departure itself resolves the excess situation and no other action is needed.
2. If the employee who departed was assigned to an authorized or temporary authorized position, then an employee who is assigned to an excess position must then be assigned against that now-vacant authorized or temporary authorized position, freeing the excess position for elimination.

a. Exception: If the vacated position is an established supervisory position, the authorized or temporary authorization can be resused and filled without additional approval allowing the excess position to remain. The vacated position must also meet classification and position management standards.

12. Resourcing Options

- A. Managers, in consultation with the Human Resources Service Center, should consider the variety of Federal employment resourcing options when seeking to fill vacancies, and those considerations should be included in organizational staffing plans. Options include permanent competitive recruitment, permanent non-competitive recruitment (e.g., Schedule A, 30% disability compensable veterans, etc.), TERM appointments, temporary appointments, emergency hires, non-competitive reassignments, details and temporary promotions, and student program hires (i.e., Pathways).
- B. When a manager completes a request to resource labor with a contracted worker (commonly referred to as CFTE), the Supplemental Labor Management Office will route the request to the Human Resources Service Center for review and approval prior to processing. The Human Resources Service Center's review is to determine if the position is one that should be filled by a Federal employee, with the following factors in mind:
 1. Whether or not the work is inherently governmental
 2. Whether work is temporary or permanent in nature
 3. Whether or not there is proven difficulty in filling the position type with a Federal employee due to wages, location or scarcity of skill sets

13. System of Record

- A. The Human Resources Service Center maintains positions in HRMIS and each position will have a unique position number.

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- B. The Human Resources Service Center provides a Position Management Roster for each organization via HRMIS, displaying their positions (authorized, temporary authorized and excess) and assigned employees.
- C. The Human Resources Service Center maintains an Authorization Summary Report that depicts the number of authorized and temporary authorized positions for each organization.

14. Revision History

- A. This HR Policy will be maintained on the [BPA Internal Policy Library](#) website and updated as program elements change.
- B. Revisions are to be documented as follows:

Version Number	Issue Date	Description of Change or Review
1.0	12/09/2019	Initial issuance.
1.1		Added approval level required for Tier I to Tier I movement of positions in section 8.C.3. Added exception language for backfilling supervisory positions in section 11.C.2.a.

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