

Special Hiring Authorities for Veterans

Excerpted from the www.FedsHireVets.gov website. For full details about each hiring authority, visit: <http://www.fedshirevets.gov/job/shav/index.aspx>

Special Hiring Authorities for Veterans are just that...designed for veterans. Knowing about these authorities and identifying your eligibility will enhance your job search. These special authorities represent a few of many appointing authorities that agencies can use entirely at their discretion. Veterans are not entitled to appointment under any of these authorities. Check the vacancy announcements, which should clearly state "Who May Apply."

Veterans' Recruitment Appointment (VRA)

Veterans' Recruitment Appointment (VRA) is an excepted authority that allows agencies to appoint eligible veterans without competition. If you:

- are in receipt of a campaign badge for service during a war or in a campaign or expedition; **OR**
- are a disabled veteran, **OR**
- are in receipt of an Armed forces Service Medal for participation in a military operation, **OR**
- are a recently separated veteran (within the last 3 years), **AND**
- separated under honorable conditions (this means an honorable or general discharge), you are VRA eligible.

You can be appointed under this authority at any grade level up to and including a GS-11 or equivalent. This is an excepted service appointment. After successfully completing 2 years, you will be converted to the competitive service. Veterans' preference applies when using the VRA authority.

Veterans Employment Opportunity Act of 1998, as amended (VEOA)

Veterans Employment Opportunity Act of 1998, as amended (VEOA) is a competitive service appointing authority that can only be used when filling permanent, competitive service positions. It cannot be used to fill excepted service positions. It allows veterans to apply to announcements that are only open to so called "status" candidates, which means "current competitive service employees."

To be eligible for a VEOA appointment, your **latest** discharge must be issued under honorable conditions (this means an honorable or general discharge), **AND** you must be either:

- a preference eligible (defined in title 5 U.S.C. 2108(3)), **OR**
- a veteran who substantially completed 3 or more years of active service.

When agencies recruit from outside their own workforce under merit promotion (internal) procedures, announcements must state VEOA is applicable. As a VEOA eligible you are not subject to geographic area of consideration limitations. When applying under VEOA, you must rate and rank among the best qualified when compared to current employee applicants in order to be considered for appointment. Your veterans' preference does not apply to internal agency actions such as promotions, transfers, reassignments and reinstatements.

30% or More Disabled Veteran

30% or More Disabled Veteran allows any veteran with a 30% or more service-connected disability to be non-competitively appointed.

You are eligible if you:

- retired from active military service with a service-connected disability rating of 30% or more; **OR**
- you have a rating by the Department of Veterans Affairs showing a compensable service-connected disability of 30% or more.

This authority can be used to make permanent, temporary (not to exceed 1 year) or term (more than 1 year, but not more than 4) appointments in the competitive service. There is no grade level restriction.

Disabled Veterans Enrolled in a VA Training Program

Disabled veterans eligible for training under the VA vocational rehabilitation program may enroll for training or work experience at an agency under the terms of an agreement between the agency and VA. While enrolled in the VA program, the veteran is **not a Federal employee** for most purposes but is a beneficiary of the VA.

Training is tailored to the individual's needs and goals, so there is no set length. If the training is intended to prepare the individual for **eventual appointment** in the agency rather than just provide work experience, the agency must ensure that the training will enable the veteran to meet the qualification requirements for the position.

Schedule A Appointing Authority

Though not specifically for veterans, the Schedule A authority for people with disabilities, 5 CFR 213.3102(u), is an excepted authority that agencies can use to appoint eligible veterans who have a severe physical, psychological, or intellectual disability. To be eligible, you must:

Show proof of your disability. Documentation may be from any licensed medical professional (e.g., a physician or other medical professional certified by a State, the District of Columbia, or a U.S. Territory to practice medicine), a licensed vocational rehabilitation specialist (i.e., State or private), or any Federal or State agency, or agency of the District of Columbia or a U.S. territory that issues or provides disability benefits.

Agencies can use this authority, at their discretion, to appoint you at any grade level and for any job (time-limited or permanent) for which you qualify. Veterans' preference applies when agencies hire individuals under this authority. After 2 years of satisfactory service, the agency may convert you, without competition, to the competitive service.

OPM encourages job-seeking veterans to ask for consideration under as many hiring authorities as they are eligible, in addition to claiming their preference under the competitive examining process (if applicable).