

## **Fact Sheet: OPM Launches Merit Hiring Plan to Modernize Federal Workforce and Restore Accountability**

The White House Domestic Policy Council (DPC), in coordination with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), has issued a new Merit Hiring Plan for the federal workforce. This new Merit Hiring Plan is an ambitious overhaul of federal hiring processes to restore accountability, ensure merit-based recruitment, and attract top talent to the federal government.

As directed by President Trump's Executive Order 14170, [\*Reforming the Federal Hiring Process and Restoring Merit to Government Service\*](#), the Merit Hiring Plan modernizes recruitment practices, eliminates outdated barriers, and reaffirms the foundational principle that federal employment is based on skill, dedication, and a commitment to American ideals.

### **Background:**

- The federal hiring process has been plagued by inefficiencies, long hiring times, and barriers to attracting top talent. This has negatively impacted the efficiency of the federal service and prevented the federal government from recruiting and retaining top talent.
- Quotas and preferences based on characteristics such as gender or DEI in federal hiring, recruitment, and promotion undermine the federal workforce.
- The Merit Hiring Plan builds on the [\*Chance to Compete Act of 2024\*](#) which emphasizes skills-based and competency-based assessments and greater involvement of subject matter experts in hiring.

### **Key Reforms:**

- Prioritizing talented candidates who demonstrate merit, competence, and a commitment to the rule of law and the U.S. Constitution. Job vacancy announcements will include free-response questions that address these capacities. Hiring based on race, sex, or religion, and other DEI criteria is prohibited.
- Continuing to shift the focus from degree-based to skills-based hiring and eliminating unnecessary educational requirements. Agencies must use technical and alternative assessments and end outdated self-assessments.
- Decreasing government-wide time-to-hire to under 80 days by streamlining the background check process, using talent pools and shared certificates.
- Expanding the use of analytics to identify workforce gaps and improve recruitment strategies.
- Enhancing transparency with candidates with regular updates on application status, timelines, and feedback on hiring decisions where appropriate.
- Ensuring agency leadership actively participates in implementing new hiring processes.
- Creating HR best practices that the Chief Human Capital Officer at each agency must adopt to enable strategic recruitment and hiring actions.

### **Implementation:**

- Both OPM and agencies will establish Talent Teams to drive recruitment of candidates, target early career talent from diverse institutions, and enhance STEM and veterans' recruitment through strategic partnerships.
- Position descriptions will be standardized for 135 job series and shared certificates and talent pools will be expanded to streamline hiring across agencies.
- Security clearance reciprocity will be improved so vetting is completed in three days for eligible candidates. Continuous vetting will be utilized to monitor post-appointment conduct.

**Impact:**

- Strengthens the federal workforce with highly capable, mission-driven employees.
- Reinforces a merit-based civil service dedicated to serving the American people effectively and faithfully.
- Cuts bureaucratic red tape and brings hiring practices in line with private sector best practices.