**Approved for Release**
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**Date**

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**
**OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT**

**HUMAN RESOURCES (HR) BULLETIN #179, FY13**

**SUBJECT:** The Presidential Management Fellows (PMF) Program

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** Upon release of this HR Bulletin

**EXPIRATION DATE:** Effective until canceled or superseded

**SUPERSEDES:** HR Bulletin #138, FY11, dated August 25, 2011

**BACKGROUND:** Executive Order (EO) 13562, "Recruiting and Hiring Students and Recent Graduates," required the Federal Government to enhance opportunities to attract current and recent students to careers in Federal service. In response, the Pathways Program was created by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM); the final rule was issued on May 11, 2012, effective July 10, 2012. To implement the Pathways Program, the Department of Commerce (Department) entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with OPM, effective August 7, 2012, which modified the PMF Program to allow a broader applicant pool and establish more comprehensive training.

**REVISIONS:** This bulletin updates the qualifications and eligibility for the PMF Program and the regulatory requirements. It changes the number of days to complete the Individual Development Plan (IDP) from 30 to 45, mandates a participant agreement (prior to appointment), requires each PMF Fellow to have a mentor within 90 days, updates policy on partial reimbursement of the PMF fee if a Fellow moves to another agency, removes the authority for extensions beyond 120 days, and provides the Department authority to grant readmission to the PMF Program.

**PURPOSE:** This bulletin updates Department guidance on the PMF Program upon implementation of the Pathways Program. It should be used in conjunction with the Department's current HR Bulletin on the Pathways Program.

**COVERAGE:** This policy applies to all Department managers, supervisors, the Department PMF Program Manager (Program Manager), and bureau/operating unit PMF Coordinators (PMF Coordinators).

**POLICY:** The OPM PMF Office continues to manage the PMF Program, including nationwide recruiting and orientation training. Those selected as Presidential Management Fellows (Fellows) receive an initial two-year Schedule D excepted service appointment at the General Schedule (GS)-9, GS-11, or GS-12 level (or equivalent). Following successful completion of the Program and obtaining certification by the bureau/operating unit's Executive Resources Board (ERB) or equivalent, the Fellow **may** be converted to a full-time, career, career-conditional, or term appointment in the competitive service.

**PERSONNEL CEILING:** Fellows count against personnel ceilings. To hire a Fellow, supervisors must have an approved permanent or term full-time position available when a selection is made.

**REIMBURSEMENT FEE:** OPM requires payment of a reimbursement fee, which covers costs associated with the recruitment, selection, placement, orientation, and graduation of Fellows. Reimbursement fees shall be paid by the operating unit within 30 days of a PMF Finalist accepting a PMF Program appointment.

**PROGRAM RESPONSIBILITIES:** The Department's Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM) serves as the Program policy office and is responsible for developing and implementing Program policy and guidance, for providing accountability and oversight, and for being the liaison office with the OPM PMF Office. The Department shall appoint a Pathways Program Officer, and a Department PMF Program Manager; each bureau/operating unit must appoint a PMF Coordinator. The designated PMF Coordinator manages and administers all aspects of the bureau/operating unit's PMF Program in accordance with this policy.

The Department Pathways Program Officer will work with the Program Manager and the PMF Coordinators to provide PMF-related data and information to OPM as requested. The PMF Coordinators monitor and facilitate recruitment, hiring, and employment policies and procedures across the bureau/operating unit. PMF Coordinators are responsible for attending OPM's annual PMF Job Fair if their bureau/operating units are interested in hiring a PMF Fellow.

Each PMF Coordinator is responsible for advising on and communicating PMF Program requirements to supervisors, as well as for their organization's PMF Program recruitment and appointments. In addition, the PMF Coordinator monitors and oversees the training and development of Fellows within the bureau/operating unit to ensure they receive the training and developmental/rotational assignment(s) set forth by OPM regulations. Upon request, each PMF Coordinator will advise the Program Manager of their bureau/operating unit's projected PMF hiring needs for the specified fiscal year(s). At the time of a PMF Program appointment, the responsible PMF Coordinator will monitor the hiring office's timely completion and submission of OPM Form 1616 (Interagency/Intergovernmental Agreement) to pay the required reimbursement fees. PMF Coordinators must immediately notify the Program Manager of any PMF hires and provide appointment dates.

Supervisors will identify positions in their organizations to be filled through the PMF Program. Supervisors should attend the annual spring PMF Job Fair to meet candidates, promote the agency, and conduct interviews. Hiring managers will notify their PMF Coordinator of the PMF

Finalist(s) they wish to select; the PMF Coordinator will then notify the Servicing Human Resources Office (SHRO), in order for an HR Specialist to extend a job offer.

To balance the development of Fellows and enhance their performances, supervisors will:

1. Develop an IDP for each Fellow selected, within 30-45 days of his/her appointment;
2. Authorize and monitor completion of at least one developmental assignment of four to six continuous months in the occupation or functional discipline in which the Fellow will most likely be placed. This assignment must have full-time management and/or technical responsibilities consistent with the Fellow's IDP;
3. Ensure completion of 80 hours of formal interactive required training per year;
4. Provide a performance plan and annual performance evaluation in accordance with the Department's performance management program; and
5. Support the Fellow's participation in developmental activities.

PMF appointees participate in developing their IDPs with their supervisors, and mentors, with oversight from their PMF Coordinator. Fellows will participate in various OPM, Department, and bureau/operating unit-sponsored program activities, such as formal and informal orientations; trainings; developmental/rotational and shadowing assignments; other developmental activities; and graduation. Fellows should assist in planning and organizing other meetings and workshops that will contribute to their development.

The PMF Coordinator in each bureau/operating unit shall perform the initial PMF Program completion review, using the PMF Program Requirements certification sheet (attached) for successful completion of the Fellows' requirements. The PMF Coordinator must consider whether the Fellow has: (1) demonstrated successful performance according to his or her performance plan; (2) achieved the developmental expectations set forth in the IDP; and (3) met all requirements of the Program (see Title 5, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 362).

The PMF Coordinator certifies PMF Program completion by signing the certification sheet. The PMF Coordinator forwards the signed certification sheet, along with the corresponding documentation, to the bureau/operating unit's ERB or equivalent for final certification. The result of the certification is forwarded to the PMF Coordinator. The PMF Coordinator forwards the certification result to the Program Manager, who then forwards it to OPM (who administer the PMF Program and maintain statistical data). OPM will contact the Fellows and provide them with information about the PMF Program's graduation ceremony.

**ELIGIBILITY:** To be eligible for a PMF Program appointment, a candidate must:

1. Have completed an advanced degree from a qualifying institution within the previous two years; or
2. Be currently enrolled in a qualifying educational institution and expected to complete a qualifying advanced degree by August 31 of the academic year in which the competition is held.

In addition, the individual must:

1. Successfully complete an OPM assessment, be selected by OPM as a PMF Finalist; and
2. Meet the requirements of the position being appointed, in accordance with OPM's Qualification Standards.

An applicant may apply for the PMF Program more than once as long as he or she meets the eligibility criteria. However, if an applicant becomes a Finalist and subsequently applies for the PMF Program during the next open announcement, the applicant will forfeit his or her status as a current Finalist.

**FINALISTS:** OPM is responsible for recruiting candidates for the PMF Program. Individuals who meet the requirements of Title 5, CFR § 362.403(c) apply directly to OPM. OPM conducts the assessment process, adjudicates veterans' preference, and selects the PMF Finalists for that year's PMF class. Applicants who have been deemed Finalists are considered eligible for the PMF Program during the 12-month period immediately following OPM's official announcement of their selection as a Finalist.

## APPOINTMENTS

**TYPE OF APPOINTMENT:** Fellows are appointed under Title 5, CFR § 213.3402(c), an excepted service Schedule D appointment not to exceed two years.

**GRADE/BAND LEVEL:** Fellows must be appointed no later than 12 months after selection as a Finalist, and must be appointed at the GS-9 level or equivalent, at a minimum. However, if the bureau/operating unit determines that a Fellow meets the requisite qualification requirements, it may appoint the Fellow at the GS-11 or GS-12 level or equivalent.

OPM assesses PMF applicants for general eligibility and initial appointment at the designated minimum grade level or equivalent. To make an initial appointment above the minimum level, the SHRO must determine that the PMF Finalist meets the qualification standard for the position at a higher grade level, for example, GS-11, GS-12, or equivalent. A higher step within the minimum GS pay range may be permissible, in accordance with the highest previous rate rules, under Title 5, CFR § 531.221, if the Fellow has had prior higher level Federal civilian service. The SHRO will determine the permissible rate of pay. For bureau/operating units participating in an alternative personnel management system, the supervisor may set the pay anywhere within the pay band to which the Fellow is appointed.

The superior qualifications authority under Title 5, CFR § 531.212 may be used to grant appointments above the minimum rate for any GS grade level covered by this HR Bulletin.

**APPOINTMENT EXTENSIONS:** A Fellow's appointment may be extended by up to 120 days based only on the criteria described in the Department's MOU with OPM. Extensions must be approved by the OHRM Director for Human Resources Management and Chief Human Capital Officer (Director). Requests to extend a Fellow's appointment beyond two years must be submitted by the appropriate Principal Human Resources Manager (PHRM) to the Director, and

be received at least 30 days before the Fellow's appointment expiration date, and must include a justification for the extension. **Extensions beyond 120 days are not permissible.**

**PROBATIONARY PERIOD UPON CONVERSION:** Fellows serve under a trial period for the duration of the PMF appointment. Time worked under a PMF appointment is credited toward the probationary period. Once a Fellow is non-competitively converted to a career or career-conditional appointment in the competitive service, he or she does not serve a probationary period and acquires competitive status immediately upon appointment (Title 5, CFR § 315.713).

Note: Fellows converted to a term appointment in the competitive service do not serve a new trial period. Time worked under a PMF appointment is credited toward completion of the trial period in accordance with Title 5, CFR § 316.304(a).

**CAREER TENURE:** Service under PMF counts toward career tenure in the competitive service if the Fellow is converted to a career-conditional appointment upon completion of the program. To obtain career status, employees in the competitive service must have three years of substantially continuous service without a break in service of more than 30 calendar days (Title 5, CFR §§ 315.201(a), 315.201(b)(1)(xiii), and 315.201(3)).

## RECRUITMENT PROCESS

**RECRUITING FELLOWS:** Hiring officials can hire Fellows as highly skilled new staff members and as investments in succession planning. The OPM PMF Office recruits thousands of candidates, assesses their skills, and selects only the top Finalists, saving hiring managers time and expenses as well as ensuring a premium candidate pool.

There are several recruitment options that hiring managers may use when recruiting Fellows. Hiring managers may post positions on OPM's online Talent Acquisition System (TAS), view finalists' resumes on TAS, and/or attend OPM's annual spring PMF Job Fair. Fellows may be hired at any time throughout the 12-month period immediately following OPM's official announcement of their selection as Finalists.

Posting Positions to TAS: PMF Coordinators are encouraged to post PMF positions on OPM's online TAS. When feasible, positions should be posted before the annual PMF Job Fair, though positions may be posted throughout the year. PMF Coordinators are responsible for entering positions, editing or deleting existing positions, and maintaining up-to-date information. Positions should include details on the specific skills and abilities the operating unit is seeking. There is no minimum or maximum open period, and postings can be canceled at any time without notice. PMF Coordinators and hiring managers must consider all Finalists who apply for, express an interest in, or who are contacted by Department personnel for a position that has been posted on TAS. The Program Manager can provide TAS access to PMF Coordinators, who will in turn provide access to hiring managers within their bureau/operating unit who are interested in viewing Finalists' resumes.

Viewing Finalists' Resumes: PMF Coordinators and hiring managers may view Finalists' resumes on TAS throughout the 12-month period following the official announcement of their selection as Finalists. Once the SHRO has determined that a Finalist meets the qualification requirements for a position, PMF Coordinators and hiring managers may contact the Finalist for an interview.

Attending the Annual Spring PMF Job Fair: PMF Coordinators and hiring managers may attend OPM's annual spring PMF Job Fair. During the Job Fair, hiring managers and human resources (HR) personnel may receive resumes, interview Finalists, and extend tentative job offers. PMF Coordinators must notify the Program Manager of their intent to attend the Job Fair and to request an exhibit booth and an interview booth(s), if applicable. The Program Manager is the liaison with OPM and shall register bureau/operating units as well as secure requested exhibit and interview booths.

Extending Appointments: HR Specialists can extend job offers to Finalists in the PMF Program, for which they must meet OPM's "Operating Manual: Qualification Standards for General Schedule Positions," at any time during the 12-month period immediately following OPM's official announcement of their selection as Finalists. **PMF Finalists must actually enter on duty within this 12-month period.**

## VETERANS' PREFERENCE

**PREFERENCE ELIGIBLES:** Preference eligibles receive three-tiered consideration during the PMF process. The first tier occurs during the nomination process. The second tier occurs during the OPM application review and rating process, and the third tier occurs during the agency appointment process. Veterans' preference is applied in accordance with Title 5, CFR §§ 302.201, 302.302, and 302.304. During the nomination process, candidates are ranked according to their assessment score, with any adjudicated veterans' preference applied. OPM adjudicates veterans' preference based on the supporting documentation supplied by the PMF candidate. Compensable disabled veterans are placed at the top of the list. From this list, OPM designates the PMF Finalists and posts the Finalists' names and online resumes on the PMF website in alphabetical (unranked) order.

PMF Coordinators and hiring managers who are registered users of OPM's TAS can access a separate list that indicates the veterans' preference category for those Finalists with preference.

**Veterans' preference procedures under Title 5, CFR §§ 302.304 and 302.401 must be applied during the consideration and selection process to all applicants within the same applicant pool. The following methods of consideration are considered to be in the same applicant pool:**

1. Finalists Express an Interest: "Express an interest" means an applicant has initiated contact with the bureau/operating unit in person, by phone, or other direct communication and has asked for consideration for appointment to a specific position, including providing a resume at the annual spring PMF Job Fair.

2. Finalists Apply to a Position Posted on TAS: Applicants who apply to a specific position posted on TAS during its posted time period.
3. Finalists Contacted by Department Personnel: All candidates who are contacted in reference to the same position. Once contact is made with an applicant and the individual is interested in the position, they are considered part of the applicant pool for that particular position.

**For example:** When a preference eligible expresses an interest in a specific position and a non-preference eligible applies to the same position through TAS, the hiring manager must select the preference eligible, for he or she is considered to be in the same applicant pool as the non-preference eligible who applied for the position.

**Applying Veterans' Preference:** Hiring managers must select from the **highest available preference group** based upon the applicant's preference designation within the pool. The highest preference group is the CPS and CP (combined), the next group is the XP, and the last preference group is the TP. When there are fewer than three preference eligible candidates in the highest preference group, consideration may be expanded to include the next group.

**For example:** First consideration must be given to the highest preference group, consisting of preference eligibles having a service-connected disability of 10 percent or more (CPS and CP); second consideration is to other 10-point preference eligibles (XP); third consideration is to 5-point preference eligibles (TP); and last consideration is to non-preference eligibles. Once a job offer is extended, accepted, and an enter-on-duty date is established for available position(s), that specific applicant pool is closed. Preference eligibles who request consideration after job offers are extended and accepted for all of the available positions will become part of a new applicant pool that will be established if/when a new position becomes available.

**PASSING OVER OR REMOVING A PREFERENCE ELIGIBLE:** A preference eligible who is contacted by a hiring manager or other Department personnel, who has expressed an interest in, or has applied to a specific position, may only be removed from consideration upon approval of a formal pass-over request. The hiring manager must demonstrate that the individual does not qualify or meet the criteria for the position. Prior to removing the preference eligible, the hiring manager must submit a written request to pass over the preference eligible to his or her PMF Coordinator, documenting the reason(s) why the individual is not qualified or did not meet the criteria for the position and should be removed from consideration. Upon concurrence, the PMF Coordinator must submit a written request and justification to the Pathways Program Officer, who will review the justification and, if applicable, forward the request to the Director for approval. Only upon receiving written approval from the Director may a preference eligible be passed over and removed from consideration in favor of a non-preference eligible.

The documentation and approval process:

1. For 10 percent or more but less than 30 percent compensable disabled veterans, and other preference eligibles (CP, XP, TP): All requests must be forwarded to the Pathways Program Officer. Upon review by the Pathways Program Officer, the request will be forwarded, if applicable, to the Director for approval. Only after final approval from the

Director can a 10 percent or more (but less than 30 percent) compensable disabled veteran, or other preference eligible, be passed over. Submission requests must include an Agency Request to Pass Over a Preference Eligible or Object to an Eligible (SF-62); a copy of the job announcement, if applicable; the position description; the crediting plan; the preference eligible's application; a ranking sheet justification for pass over; and any other available information and documents pertinent to the case.

2. For 30 percent or more compensable disabled veterans (CPS): All requests must be forwarded to the Pathways Program Officer. Upon review by the Pathways Program Officer, the request will be forwarded, if applicable, to the Director for approval. Upon preliminary approval from the Director, requests for pass over of a 30 percent or more compensable disabled veteran must be submitted to OPM by the Director for final approval. Only after the pass-over request has received final approval from OPM can the 30 percent or more compensable disabled veteran be passed over. Submission requests must include an Agency Request to Pass Over a Preference Eligible or Object to an Eligible (SF-62); a copy of the job announcement, if applicable; the position description; the crediting plan; the preference eligible's application; a ranking sheet justification for pass over; and any other available information and documents pertinent to the case.

3. Pass over requests for all preference eligibles when based on material, intentional false statement, or deception or fraud in examination or appointment (CPS, CP, XP, TP): All requests must be submitted to the Pathways Program Officer, who will submit them, if applicable, to the Director for review and preliminary approval. Upon preliminary approval from the Director, requests to pass over an individual must be submitted to OPM by the Director for final approval. Only after the request has received final approval from OPM may the individual be passed over. Submission requests must include an Agency Request to Pass Over a Preference Eligible or Object to an Eligible (SF-62); a copy of the job announcement, if applicable; the position description; the crediting plan; the preference eligible's application; a ranking sheet justification for pass over; and any other available information and documents pertinent to the case.

**PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS:**

**PARTICIPANT AGREEMENT:** Prior to appointment, a Fellow must enter into a Participant Agreement with the bureau/operating unit. The bureau/operating unit may use OPM's Participant Agreement template or develop its own. However, at a minimum, the Participant Agreement must contain the following elements:

1. A general description of duties
2. Work schedule
3. The length of the appointment
4. Mentorship opportunities
5. Training requirements
6. Evaluation procedures that will be used for the Fellow
7. Requirements for continuation and successful completion of the PMF Program

8. Minimum eligibility requirements for noncompetitive conversion to a permanent or term competitive service appointment

Note: Fellows appointed prior to January 24, 2013, are not required to sign a Participant Agreement.

**PROGRAM MENTORS:** PMF Coordinators **must** ensure that within the first 90 days of a Fellow's appointment, the Fellow has been assigned a mentor. The mentor must be a managerial employee outside of the Fellow's chain of command. The PMF Coordinator, in conjunction with the Fellow's supervisor, will determine the Fellow's mentor. Mentors should be those who can provide leadership, insight, guidance, and objectivity to the Fellow during the PMF Program and thereafter. Mentors serve as role models and personal advisors to convey positive information about the Department's mission, policies, rules, and regulations. In addition to a mandatory mentor, Fellows may also be paired with other skilled and experienced employees (for networking and developing other insights and skills) in preparation for managerial and supervisory positions. However, guidance provided by these employees to the Fellow is not a substitute for an officially designated mentor.

Note: Fellows hired prior to January 24, 2013, are not subject to the mentor requirement.

**INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN (IDP):** The IDPs of Fellows must be completed within 45 days after the effective date of their appointment and must be aligned with the Fellow's performance plan, target position, and career development goals. The Fellow's IDP should be established in consultation between the Fellow, supervisor, PMF Coordinator, and mentor. IDPs are designed for the two-year appointment. They set forth the specific developmental activities designed to impart the competencies of the occupation or functional discipline in which the Fellow is most likely to be placed. IDPs must indicate the competencies required for each grade level/band as well as provide a benchmark identifying the successful attainment of the needed competencies. IDPs should specify how and when the learning objectives will be met, and determine how the Fellow will be evaluated.

The target position of a Fellow is a position, occupational series, or program area, as defined by the employing organization, which may plan to employ the Fellow upon successful completion of the PMF Program. IDPs should be updated to include previously unforeseen training and developmental requirements as needed.

Each IDP should be individually tailored around the following elements:

1. Target Position: A brief description of the target position, and the specific knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to qualify for the target position upon successful completion of the two-year PMF Program.
2. Learning Objective: The learning objective should include general management areas, as well as specific technical skills and experiences that will qualify the Fellow for the target position at the end of the Program.
3. Details and Timeline: The IDP should clearly indicate when and how the learning objectives will be accomplished. It should outline the required developmental

assignment and the 80 hours of formal interactive training each year of the Program, including OPM's Orientation Program and the Department's Orientation Program.

4. Demonstrated Success: The IDP should include a means for tracking the completion of all IDP objectives at the end of the two-year PMF Program. The supervisor, mentor, PMF Coordinator, and Fellow should be partners in determining if the objectives set forth in the IDP have been accomplished. Should events preclude an individual from attaining specific learning objectives by a particular date, alternative arrangements should be made with the supervisor.

**ORIENTATION, TRAINING, AND DEVELOPMENT:** Supervisors will provide a minimum of 80 hours per year of formal interactive training for each Fellow that addresses the core competencies required in the occupation or functional discipline that the Fellow will most likely be placed in upon completion. Formal interactive training can be in the form of "blended courses" that combine online and in-person learning. Blended courses must combine some form of human instructor interaction with multiple students, either through virtual means or in person, and any electronic learning component (e.g., webinars). Courses that are only technology-based, such as online, virtual instruction, etc., cannot count toward the 80 hours of formal interactive training. OPM-sponsored PMF training (including orientation), and the Department's orientation training, count toward the annual 80-hour requirement. Mandatory trainings for employees, such as on security and ethics, do not count toward the annual 80-hour requirement.

Fellows must attend the following:

1. OPM's Orientation Training Program: Each Fellow should complete this training during the first year of the PMF Program. The orientation session provides Fellows with an overall perspective on the Federal Government and the PMF Program, and includes components on leadership, communications, teamwork, and preparation of IDPs. The session also provides valuable networking opportunities.
2. Department Orientation Training Conducted by the Department's OHRM: Each Fellow should complete this training during the first year of the PMF Program. This training covers topics such as the Department's mission, organizational structure, strategic plans, and other relevant material.

**DEVELOPMENTAL/ROTATIONAL ASSIGNMENTS:** Developmental assignments are required as part of the PMF Program and are intended to broaden the Fellow's perspective on the work of the Department, which can lead to an insightful employee and a more effective leader. Developmental assignments **must** prepare the Fellow for the occupation or function in which he or she is likely to be placed. Rotational assignments are not required; however, they can be used to broaden the Fellow's perspective of the Government's executive branch. Developmental and rotational assignments can range from assignments at a Fellow's home agency (outside of their immediate office), to another agency, or even outside of the Federal Government. The assignments are to be clearly outlined and negotiated in advance with the Fellow's supervisor.

Developmental and rotational assignments in the PMF Program are covered under Department policy on details and assignments and must follow the appropriate approval process (see below).

1. Developmental Assignment: The supervisor **must** provide a Fellow at least one developmental assignment of four to six continuous months in the occupation or functional discipline in which the Fellow will most likely be placed. The assignment must have full-time management or technical responsibilities consistent with the PMF Fellow's IDP.
2. Rotational Assignment: The supervisor may provide the Fellow with additional rotational assignments from one to six months, to any desired field. Fellows can gain management experience, work in specific occupational fields, or learn about a program function from another agency's perspective. The nature of the rotational assignment should be agreed upon by the supervisor and the Fellow. While rotational assignments do not have to directly relate to the Fellow's present position, current field, or functional area (in which the Fellow will most likely be placed), assignments must relate to the overall career path identified in the IDP. Rotational assignments are to be decided by the home organization, and the Fellow's supervisor and host organization must agree on their timing so there is no conflict with the Fellow's responsibilities in the home organization.

Developmental and rotational assignments must be carefully planned and documented to provide a clear understanding of the expectations, goals, timing of the assignment, and the office where the training will occur, in order to provide maximum benefit for the Fellow. Training objectives should be well-defined prior to the effective date of the assignment. Developmental and rotational assignment supervisors are responsible for preparing a written assessment of the Fellow's performance at the conclusion of the assignment, including training received and work accomplished, and must provide the assessment to the supervisor of record. The supervisor of record will use the assessment when completing the Fellow's annual performance evaluation. Upon completion of the developmental or rotational assignment, Fellows will return to their position of record.

The written training objectives shall be developed by the supervisor of record in consultation with the host supervisor, the Fellow, and the PMF Coordinator, and must include:

1. Dates of the assignment
2. Duties that the Fellow will perform
3. Relationship of the developmental or rotational assignment to the Fellow's career goals
4. How the Fellow's performance will be appraised during the assignment, and
5. Long-term benefit to the Department of the developmental or rotational assignment.

Approval Process – Both reimbursable and non-reimbursable developmental and rotational assignments outside the Department must be approved by the Director. Developmental and rotational assignments between bureaus may be negotiated by heads of bureaus/operating units or their designees and do not require the Director's approval. In addition, substantive modifications and extensions for assignments to organizations outside the Department must be approved by the Director.

Note: Before a Fellow begins an assignment outside the Department to another Federal agency or between bureaus, an MOU between the parties must be reviewed and approved by the Office

of General Counsel (OGC). All MOUs must be submitted to the Program Manager **unsigned,** who will in turn submit them to OGC.

Before a Fellow begins a temporary assignment to a State, local, or Tribal government; institution of higher education; or other eligible organizations, an Intergovernmental Personnel Act agreement is required.

**OTHER DEVELOPMENTAL ACTIVITIES:** In addition to formal interactive training, developmental activities may include the following: on-the-job training; mentoring sessions; career management counseling; rotational assignments; educational brown-bag lunches; cross-training; career broadening assignments; and attendance at conferences, workshops, and off-site meetings. Supervisors and bureau/operating units may provide additional informal training and development through participation in other activities, such as:

Shadowing Assignments. Fellows may complete shadowing assignments of a short duration, such as one week. By shadowing managers, Fellows gain insight regarding the scope of managerial responsibilities and management approaches.

Readings and Seminars. Fellows may meet informally with their supervisors, organizational staff, and other Fellows to discuss books or articles on areas of interest.

Meet-the-Manager Sessions. Fellows may meet with other managers outside their bureau/ operating unit to discuss managerial duties and responsibilities, current Department- and bureau-level issues and recommendations regarding the Fellow's career development.

Program Impact Paper. At the end of the first and second year of the PMF Program, Fellows may be asked by their PMF Coordinator, or their supervisor, to prepare a short paper discussing their experiences and observations, which will be used in determining potential improvements to the PMF Program within the bureau/operating unit and/or Department.

## PROMOTIONS:

**PROMOTION CRITERIA:** Time-in-grade requirements do not apply to the promotion of a Fellow, and individuals may be promoted to the GS-13 level or equivalent provided they meet the following eligibility requirements:

1. Fellows are eligible for promotion to the next higher grade/band after they have served in their current position of record for a minimum of 120 days, as required by the Department's performance management system; have a performance rating of at least Level 3 or equivalent; meet OPM's "Qualification Standards for General Schedule Positions" for the appropriate series and grade/band; possess the specialized experience equivalent in difficulty to the next lower grade/band; demonstrate the ability to perform at the higher grade/band; and meet all of the requirements for promotion as identified in their IDP.
2. Promotions above the GS-13 level or equivalent for a Fellow can only occur on or after the date of conversion to the competitive service and are dependent upon the Department

or SHRO's Merit Assignment Plan, the position's career ladder and full performance level, and the Fellow's performance. However, once a Fellow is converted to the competitive service, time-in-grade regulations apply.

Note: Fellows covered under the Commerce Alternative Personnel System (CAPS) or the Alternative Personnel Management System (APMS) are not eligible to receive an increase in salary, except for performance increases, without a promotion to a higher band.

**PROMOTION APPROVAL PROCESS:** PMF supervisors shall provide the following to the PMF Coordinator:

1. Standard Form (SF)-52 requesting the promotion
2. The Fellow's current performance plan and appropriate end-of-year performance rating or interim rating
3. Documentation that the Fellow meets all requirements of OPM's "Qualification Standards for General Schedule Positions" for the appropriate series and grade/band, meets the specialized experience equivalent in difficulty to the next lower grade/band, and demonstrates the ability to perform at the higher grade/band
4. A copy of the Fellow's IDP for his or her current grade/band, and
5. Documentation that the Fellow meets all requirements for promotion as identified in his or her IDP

The PMF Coordinator shall review and certify that all criteria for the current grade/band have been met, and forward the documentation and certification to the bureau/operating unit's ERB or equivalent for final approval. After the ERB's or equivalent final approval, the promotion request may be submitted to the appropriate SHRO for processing. The PMF Coordinator shall notify the Program Manager of the Fellow's promotion.

## CERTIFICATION/CONVERSION

**CERTIFICATION OF COMPLETION:** The PMF Coordinator must begin the certification process with enough time to complete the entire process so they can notify the Fellow of the bureau/operating unit's ERB or equivalent decision **no later** than 30 days before the appointment expires.

1. Upon a Fellow's completion of the PMF Program, the PMF Coordinator must evaluate and certify in writing (using the attached certification sheet) that all requirements of the PMF Program have been met, including developmental expectations set forth in the individual's performance plan and IDP, and that the Fellow has a demonstrated performance rating of at least Level 3 or equivalent.
2. Once the PMF Coordinator certifies PMF Program completion using the certification sheet, the signed certification is forwarded to the bureau/operating unit's ERB or equivalent for final review and certification. The appropriate ERB or equivalent member signs the certification sheet upon determination that the Fellow has completed all requirements of the PMF Program and can be non-competitively converted to a full-time, career, career-conditional, or term appointment in the competitive service.

3. The bureau/operating unit's ERB or equivalent member shall return the signed certification sheet to the PMF Coordinator.
4. The PMF Coordinator shall notify the Fellow of being certified or not certified **no later than** 30 calendar days before the expiration of his or her appointment in the PMF Program.
5. The PMF Coordinator shall provide the Program Manager a list of the following for each Fellow who has completed the requirements of the PMF Program: name; class year; ERB or equivalent certification date; conversion date to career, career-conditional, or term appointment in the competitive service; position converted to; job series/grade; phone number; e-mail address; and the ERB or equivalent official's name, number, and e-mail address.
6. The Program Manager shall forward the information for each Fellow to OPM in accordance with OPM's "Presidential Management Fellows Program Guide for Agencies" (February 6, 2009).

If a Fellow is not certified by the bureau/operating unit, he or she may request that OPM reconsider the bureau/operating unit's determination. The Fellow must submit a written request that includes a justification to the OPM Director (or the OPM Director's designee) through the OPM PMF Office within 15 calendar days from the date of the bureau/operating unit's determination.

1. The Fellow may continue in the Program pending the outcome of his/her request for reconsideration.
2. The OPM Director or the designee's determination shall be final and not subject to further review or appeal.

**CONVERSIONS:**

1. Fellows who are certified by the bureau/operating unit's ERB or equivalent **may** be non-competitively converted to a full-time, career, career-conditional, or term appointment in the competitive service.
2. Conversions are not allowed prior to satisfactory completion of the PMF Program, as well as the bureau/operating unit's ERB or equivalent certification of satisfactory completion.
3. Conversions must be effective on the date that the two-year service requirement is met unless the appointment has been extended. Conversions can be effective at any point during the extension period once the Fellow has been certified by the operating unit's ERB, or equivalent, as having met all requirements of the PMF Program.

**PERFORMANCE/CONDUCT**

**PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT:** All Fellows are covered by either the Department's 5-Level Performance Management System, CAPS, or the APMS. Under all systems, Fellows must be issued a performance plan that outlines specific elements and standards that the Fellow is expected to accomplish during the appraisal cycle. At the midpoint of the appraisal cycle, Fellows must receive a formal progress review, and at the end of the appraisal cycle, the

supervisor of record must evaluate the Fellow's performance against the elements and standards in the performance plan, and assign a rating of record. If a Fellow's performance falls below Level 3 or equivalent, the supervisor should contact the SHRO for guidance and notify the PMF Coordinator. For additional information on the 5-Level Performance Management System, refer to Department Administrative Order (DAO) 202-430, "Performance Management System," and the Performance Management System Handbook; for CAPS, refer to the CAPS Operating Procedures Manual; and for APMS, refer to the APMS Performance Management Program.

To progress in grades and complete the PMF Program, Fellows must attain a performance rating of Level 3 or equivalent for all critical elements in their performance plan. Supervisors cannot allow a promotion or a conversion action to occur if the Fellow's performance is less than a Level 3 or equivalent.

During the PMF appointment, a three-way feedback process should be implemented between the supervisor of record, the Fellow, and the PMF Coordinator to address the Fellow's progress and the adequacy of developmental experiences. Supervisors must monitor the Fellow's work and provide feedback on whether the Fellow is meeting the learning objectives of his or her IDP.

**PERFORMANCE BELOW LEVEL 3 OR EQUIVALENT:** Fellows will be given assistance in improving whenever their performance rating is determined to be below Level 3 or equivalent. Individuals performing below that level are expected to have additional progress reviews.

Failure to meet the minimum standards outlined in the position description and performance plan can lead to warnings, termination, or other corrective action as appropriate. It is the supervisor's responsibility, with oversight from the PMF Coordinator, and the SHRO, to review and follow established regulations when addressing performance issues. Supervisors should take into consideration the Fellow's IDP, performance plan, and performance reviews when addressing performance issues.

The supervisor and PMF Coordinator should resolve performance issues before the end of the two-year Program. Fellows with demonstrated performance problems cannot be converted.

**CONDUCT ISSUES:** It is the supervisor's responsibility, with oversight from the PMF Coordinator, and the SHRO, to review and follow established regulations when addressing conduct issues. Procedures on disciplinary actions can be found in DAO 202-752, "Discipline."

The supervisor and PMF Coordinator should attempt to resolve conduct issues before the end of the two-year PMF Program. Fellows who have demonstrated ongoing conduct issues cannot be converted.

**EXPIRATION OF APPOINTMENT:** A Fellow's appointment expires at the end of the two-year PMF Program period if the Fellow is not converted, and the individual has not been granted an extension.

If a Fellow is not converted at the end of the PMF Program and the initial appointment has not been extended, the appointment expires when the certification for PMF Program completion is

denied or when the Director denies the bureau/operating unit's request for an extension (Title 5, CFR § 362.408(a)(2)). The PMF Coordinator must immediately provide written notification to the Program Manager when a Fellow's appointment expires, and the reason.

The Program Manager will provide written notification to OPM when a Fellow's appointment expires, and the reason, in accordance with Title 5, CFR § 362.408(a)(3).

**TERMINATION OF APPOINTMENT:** Either the supervisor or the Fellow may terminate the PMF Program appointment. If a proposed termination is initiated by the supervisor, prior to the expiration date of the appointment, the basis of the termination must be related to misconduct, poor performance, or suitability.

The PMF Coordinator must immediately provide written notification to the Program Manager when a Fellow's appointment is terminated, and the reason.

The Program Manager must provide written notification to OPM when a Fellow's appointment is terminated, and the reason, in accordance with Title 5, CFR § 362.408(a)(3).

**NOTIFICATION OF NON-CONVERSION:** The PMF Coordinator must provide the Fellow a notice of intent to not certify Program completion, and the reason, no later than 30 calendar days before the expiration of his or her PMF appointment. The PMF Coordinator must also provide notification to the Program Manager of the decision, and the reason, to not convert. The Program Manager must provide written notification to OPM when a Fellow is not being converted, and the reason, in accordance with Title 5, CFR § 362.408(a)(3).

## MOVEMENT OF PMFs

**MOVEMENT TO OTHER FEDERAL AGENCIES:** Fellows may move to another agency at any time during their appointment in the PMF Program. In order to remain in the PMF Program, the Fellow must separate from the current agency and the new employing agency must appoint the participant without a break in service. If the Fellow moves to another agency within the first six months of the Fellow's original appointment, the bureau/operating unit may request reimbursement of one-quarter of the placement fee from the new appointing agency. Bureaus/ operating units may also appoint Fellows from other agencies subject to the provisions of Title 5, CFR, Part 362.

The Fellow does not begin a new two-year time period in the PMF Program upon appointment by the new employing agency. Because there is no break in service, time served under the previous appointment will apply toward the completion of the two-year PMF Program with the new agency.

The PMF Coordinator must immediately provide written notification to the Program Manager when a Fellow leaves the Department. The Program Manager will notify OPM when a Fellow moves to another Federal agency, as required by OPM's "PMF Program Guide to Agencies."

**MOVEMENT TO ANOTHER BUREAU/OPERATING UNIT:** Fellows may move to another bureau/operating unit within the Department at any time during their appointment in the PMF Program with no break in service.

The Fellow does not begin a new two-year time period in the PMF Program upon appointment by the new bureau/operating unit. Because there is no break in service, time served under the previous appointment will apply toward the completion of the two-year PMF Program with the new bureau/operating unit.

The gaining PMF Coordinator must immediately provide written notification to the Program Manager when a Fellow moves from one bureau/operating unit to another, and the Program Manager will notify OPM. There is no provision in the regulations for OPM or the gaining bureau/operating unit to reimburse the original appointing bureau/operating unit for the fee paid to cover costs for the recruitment, selection, placement, orientation, and graduation of a Fellow.

**WITHDRAWAL FROM THE PROGRAM:** Fellows may withdraw from the PMF Program at any time by resigning from their appointment. Such a withdrawal will be treated as a resignation from Federal service. Individuals under service agreements for receiving incentives such as recruitment, relocation, or student loan repayment may be indebted to the Department, in accordance with Department policy, when the terms of the service agreement are not met.

A Fellow who held a career or career-conditional appointment in the competitive service in another agency or within the Department, immediately before entering the PMF Program, and who withdrew for reasons unrelated to misconduct, poor performance, or suitability may, at the Department's discretion, be placed in a career or career-conditional position, in accordance with Department policies. The Department's determination in this regard is not subject to appeal.

The PMF Coordinator must immediately provide written notification to the Program Manager when a Fellow withdraws from the PMF Program (Title 5, CFR § 362.407(a)(3)). The Program Manager must in turn notify OPM when an individual withdraws from the PMF Program.

**RESIGNATION:** Fellows who resign before completion of the PMF Program do not have reinstatement eligibility for competitive service positions based upon the PMF appointment.

**READMISSION:** Fellows who withdraw from the PMF Program for reasons related to misconduct, poor performance, or suitability, as determined by the PMF Coordinator, may not be readmitted to the PMF Program.

If a Fellow withdraws from the PMF Program for reasons **not related** to misconduct, poor performance, or suitability, he or she may petition the Director, through the Program Manager and the appropriate PMF Coordinator, for readmission and reappointment to the Program. The readmission request does not need to be for a position within the original bureau/operating unit. Upon approval from the Director, the Director shall submit written notification of the approved readmission to OPM. OPM retains the authority to overrule the Director's decision to readmit and reappoint. OPM's decision is not subject to appeal.

**STUDENT LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM:** Bureaus/operating units are authorized to repay federally insured student loans, in accordance with DAO 202-957, "Department of Commerce Repayment of Student Loan Policy." The PMF Program is not a graduate fellowship program for the purpose of Federal student loan deferment. Borrowers may not defer repayment of their loans based on participation in the PMF Program. Additional information may be obtained on the Federal Student Aid website at http://studentaid.ed.gov.

**TRAVEL EXPENSES:** Bureaus/operating units are authorized, but not required, to pay travel expenses for pre-employment interviews and first post-duty stations. However, travel expenses incurred to attend OPM- and Department-sponsored training are the responsibility of the bureau/operating unit.

**REDUCTION-IN-FORCE:** Fellows are in the excepted service, Tenure Group II, for purposes of reduction-in-force, under Title 5, CFR § 351.502.

**APPEAL RIGHTS:** Fellows are excepted service employees within the meaning of Chapters 43 and 75 in Title 5, United States Code (U.S.C.), and have appeal rights as provided therein.

**REFERENCES:** EO 13562, "Recruiting and Hiring Students and Recent Graduates"; 5 CFR, Part 362, Subpart D; 5 CFR, Part 362, Subpart A; EO 13318; OPM's "Operating Manual: Qualification Standards for General Schedule Positions"; 5 CFR §§ 362.202(b), 213.3102 (ii), 531.221, 531.212, 302.304; Department Administrative Order (DAO) 202-430, "Performance Management System"; Performance Management System Handbook; Commerce Alternative Personnel System Operating Manual; Alternative Personnel Management System program; 5 CFR §§ 362.208(b), 362.207(3), 315.708(c), 315.201(a), 315.201(b)(1)(xiii), 315.201(3); DAO 202-957, "Department of Commerce Repayment of Student Loan Policy"; 5 CFR § 351.502; 5 U.S.C. Chapters 43 and 75

**OFFICE OF POLICY AND PROGRAMS:** Valerie Smith, VSmith@doc.gov, (202) 482-0272

**PROGRAM MANAGER:** Farhan Qureshy, fqureshy@doc.gov, (202) 482-0149

# Presidential Management Fellows (PMF) Program Requirements for Fellows, (GS-9, GS-11, or GS-12 level or equivalent)

(Please print)

**Name of PMF Fellow:** _____

**Current Title, Series, Grade or equivalent:** _____

**Bureau Assigned:** _____

**Name of the Fellow's supervisor:** _____

**Date when the Fellow was accepted into the program:** _____

**Date Appointment Expires:** _____

**Name of Operating Unit PMF Coordinator:** _____

## I. Participant Agreement

Prior to appointment, a Fellow must enter into a Participant Agreement with the bureau/operating unit. The bureau/operating unit may use OPM's Participant Agreement template or develop its own. However, at a minimum, the Participant Agreement must contain the following elements:

1. A general description of duties
2. Work schedule
3. The length of the appointment
4. Mentorship opportunities
5. Training requirement
6. Evaluation procedures that will be used for the Fellow
7. Requirements for continuation and successful completion of the PMF Program
8. Minimum eligibility requirements for noncompetitive conversion to a permanent or term competitive service appointment

**A. Did the Fellow enter into a Participant Agreement before the appointment effective date? YES____ NO_____**

**B. Did the Participant Agreement contain all of the elements listed above? YES____NO_____**

## II. Program Mentor

Fellows are required to be assigned a mentor within the first 90 days of their appointment. The mentor must be a managerial employee outside of the Fellow's chain of command.

**A. Was the Fellow assigned a mentor outside of his or her chain of command within the first 90 days of appointment? YES_____ NO_____**

**B. Date that the mentor was assigned? _____**

C. Name of mentor _____

D. Bureau/Operating Unit of mentor _____

## III. Individual Development Plans (IDP)

Each IDP should be individually tailored around the following elements:

1. **Target Position**: A brief description of the target position, and the specific knowledge, skills, and abilities that will be needed to qualify for the target position upon successful completion of the two-year program.
2. **Learning Objectives**: The learning objectives should include general management areas, as well as specific technical skills and experiences, which will qualify the Fellow for the target position at the end of the fellowship.
3. **Details and Timeline**: The IDP should clearly indicate when and how the learning objectives will be accomplished. The plan should outline the required developmental assignment (4-6 continuous months in duration) as well as the 80 hours of formal classroom training each year of the fellowship, including the PMF Program's orientation and graduation training.
4. **Demonstrated Success**: The IDP should include a means for tracking accomplishments of all IDP objectives at the end of the two-year fellowship. The supervisor and the Fellow should be partners in determining that the objectives set forth in the IDP have been accomplished. Should events preclude a Fellow from attaining specific learning objectives by a particular date, alternative arrangements should be made with his or her supervisor.

**A. Did the Fellow clearly identify the target position on the IDP?** YES___ NO___

**B. Did the Fellow clearly list the learning objectives on the IDP?** YES___ NO___

**C. Did the Fellow clearly explain the details and timeline on the IDP?** YES___ NO___

**D. Does the IDP provide a means for tracking accomplishments?** YES___ NO___

## IV. Training and Development Requirements

Every PMF Fellow must complete 80 hours of formal classroom training each year, which can consist of "blended" courses. "Blended" courses combine online and in-person learning. They must combine some form of human instructor intervention with multiple students, either through virtual means or in person, and any electronic learning component (i.e., webinars). Courses that are solely technology based such as online, e-learning, virtual instruction, etc. **cannot** count towards the 80 hours of formal classroom training.

OPM's 24 hours of Initial Orientation Workshop and the Departmental Orientation Training count towards the number of training hours completed in the year the Fellow attends. The operating unit PMF Coordinators are responsible for ensuring each Fellow completes 80 hours of formal classroom training each year.

**A. Did the Fellow attend OPM's Initial Orientation Workshop?** YES___ NO___

**B. Did the Fellow attend the Departmental Orientation Training?** YES___ NO___

**C. Did the Fellow attend a total of 80 hours or more of formal interactive training in Year #1?**

YES___ NO___ **(need evidence such as Certificates of Completion)**

**D. Did the Fellow attend a total of 80 hours or more of formal interactive training in Year #2?**

**YES___ NO___ (need evidence such as Certificates of Completion)**

The content of the training should be tailored to the specific learning objectives that will qualify the PMF Fellow for the target position at the end of the PMF fellowship. The bureau will work with the Fellow to develop a written outline of core competencies and technical skills set forth in the Individual Development Plan (IDP), which the Fellow must gain before conversion to a target position.

## V. Developmental Assignment

Each Fellow must complete at least one full-time developmental assignment of at least **4 to 6 continuous months** in duration within the occupation or functional discipline in which the Fellow is most likely to be placed. The assignment must provide full-time management and/or technical responsibilities consistent with the Fellow's IDP. Developmental assignments can range from specific assignments at a Fellow's home agency, to an extended assignment in another agency or even outside the Federal Government. To be considered "developmental," the assignment must include management and/or technical responsibilities that allow the Fellow to learn as well as demonstrate his or her skills and abilities. Developmental assignments must prepare the Fellow for the occupation or function in which he or she is likely to be placed. The assignment must be clearly outlined and negotiated in advance with the Fellow's supervisor.

The developmental assignment must meet the requirements of Title 5, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 362.204(b)(4)(i)(A). A developmental assignment that is not at least 4 to 6 continuous months in duration, or is not in the occupation or functional area of the Fellow's target position, or does not have full-time management and/or technical responsibilities consistent with the Fellow's IDP, does not meet the legal requirements of the program.

Requirements in section 362.204(b)(4)(i)(B) of Title 5, CFR, specify that in addition to the developmental assignment, the Fellow **may** receive other short-term rotational assignments of 1 to 6 months in duration, at the appointing agency's discretion, to occupations or functional areas different from the one in which the Fellow will most likely be placed.

OPM's PMF Program Office facilitates Developmental and Rotational Assignments for both agencies and Fellows by posting available assignments on the PMF website under "Rotations." Instructions for posting rotations can also be found there.

In addition, OPM's PMF Program Office frequently posts Developmental Assignments within its own office for those Fellows who may be interested.

http://www.pmf.gov/agencies/index.aspx

**A. Did the Fellow complete at least a 120 consecutive days (4 months) Developmental Assignment?**

**YES___ NO___**

**B. Was the Developmental Assignment within the functional area or occupation of the IDP targeted position? YES___ NO___**

**C. Was the Developmental Assignment "full-time" and did it include management or technical responsibilities consistent with the Fellow's IDP? YES___ NO___**

VI. Approvals

**This PMF Fellow is recommended for conversion. The operating unit PMF Coordinator verified the evidence presented by the PMF Fellow and endorsed this recommendation by signing below.**

_____

Operating Unit PMF Coordinator Signature/Date

VII. Comments: If recommending against certification or requesting an extension or waiver, provide the reason(s).