



## *Manager's Guide for Pathways Employment Students and Recent Graduates*

This guide is intended for managers and supervisors interested in hiring or providing opportunities for current students or recent college graduates. It provides guidance and answers simple questions like - How do I get started; What do I need to think of; How should I prepare; What am I responsible for?

***Overview of Pathways Program***- The Pathways Programs were established by Executive Order 13562, signed 27 December 2010. The Pathways Programs supersede the Federal Career Intern Program (FCIP) and the Student Educational Employment Program (SEEP), also known as the Student Career Experience Program (SCEP), and the Student Temporary Employment Program (STEP). Appointments made through the Pathways Programs will be under Schedule D of the excepted service. The Pathways Programs provide an opportunity for noncompetitive conversion to permanent competitive service appointment; however, participation in the program confers no right to conversion upon completion of the individual program.

***Internship Program*** - The Internship Program is for current students. It provides students in high schools, colleges, trade schools and other qualifying educational institutions (such as business school and home school curriculum) with paid employment and an opportunity to explore a Federal career while completing their education. The program provides agencies with the opportunity to convert interns who successfully complete the program and academic requirements to a permanent position, however, conversion is not a requirement of the program.

The Internship Program offers two types of internship options:

1. Internship without a Not to Exceed (NTE) date (internships expected to last for more than 1 year). These internships should be used for developing students during the course of their educational programs with a long term goal of converting them to permanent positions.
2. Internship with a NTE date (temporary internships not to exceed 1 year). These internships should be used to complete temporary projects, to perform labor-intensive tasks not requiring subject matter expertise, or to fill traditional summer jobs.

Note: This program replaced the Student Career Experience Program (SCEP) and the Student Temporary Employment Program (STEP).

***Recent Graduates Program*** - The Recent Graduates Program is a one year program\* intended to promote potential careers in the civil service to individuals who, within the previous two years, graduated from qualifying educational institutions with an associate's, bachelor's, master's, professional, doctorate, vocational or technical degree or achieved a certificate from a qualifying post secondary educational institution equivalent to at least one academic year of full-time study.

To be eligible, applicants must apply within two years of degree or certificate completion. Note: A Veteran, as defined in 5 U.S.C. 2108, who, due to a military service obligation, was precluded from applying during any portion of the 2-year eligibility period shall have a full 2-year period of eligibility upon his or her release or discharge from active duty. Eligibility for a Veteran in this case cannot exceed 6 years from the date on which the veteran completed his or her degree (or certification).

The program provides agencies with the opportunity to convert recent graduates who successfully complete the program to a permanent position, however, this is not a requirement of the program.

\*The Recent Graduates program is limited to 1 year except for positions noted in the Pathways OPM/DoD MOU, the 0346 occupational series (logistics - 18 months) and in the 1750 occupation series (Instructional Systems Specialist – 24 months). Recent Graduates must be converted to a permanent position or separated at the end of the 1 year (18 months for series 346 and 24 months for 1750 series) program.

***Presidential Management Fellows (PMF) Program*** – The Presidential Management Fellows Program is the Federal Government's premier leadership development program for advanced degree candidates. It was designed to attract candidates who demonstrate academic excellence, possess management and leadership potential and have an interest and commitment to public service.

To be eligible, applicants must have completed a qualifying advanced degree within the two year period preceding the PMF Program announcement, or expect to complete the advanced degree by August 31<sup>st</sup> of the academic year in which the competition is held.

This program is administered by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM).

### ***Additional Information***

The Pathways Program regulations can be found at: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2012-05-11/pdf/2012-11068.pdf>

Please visit CHRA's Pathways Information Page for additional information and resources such as: Office of Personnel Management (OPM), Department of Defense (DoD) and Army guidance, CHRA Operational Guidance, FAQs, Guides, etc, at: <http://www.chra.army.mil/hr/tools/gps/view.asp?ID=707>

A Pathways Manager's Checklist has been created as a supplement to this Guide, the checklist can be found at: <http://www.chra.army.mil/hr/tools/gps/view.asp?ID=815>

Pathways Question and Answers for Manger's and Applicants can be found on CHRA's Pathways Program Toolkit at: <http://www.chra.army.mil/hr/tools/gps/view.asp?ID=815>

Presidential Management Fellows (PMF) Program information and processes can be found at: <http://www.pmf.gov>

*To begin, you should ask yourself what you are looking for that will meet your short and long term needs. Am I interested in hiring a student intern who is still in school or perhaps a recent graduate?*

## **Internship Program**

### **Pre-planning**

1. Am I interested in a current High School, College student or a student attending a trade school? What specific tasks and duties do I need an intern to perform? I understand that the duties of the position to which the student intern is appointed should be related to either the intern's academic or career goals. What permanent position may potentially be intended for my student intern once the program is completed?
2. Does a position description which covers my needs already exist or must I write a new one? For interns, the proper classification is the "XX99" occupational series of the appropriate General Schedule (GS) occupational group and "XX01" for Federal Wage System (WG).
3. Do I currently have sufficient funding to pay for a student intern? Will I encounter any long-term budget issues should I decide to convert my student intern to a permanent position? Generally, the GS grades could run from GS-1 to GS-12 or equivalent level under another pay and classification system, including wage grade. The appropriate grade level depends on the nature of the participant's educational program.
4. Do I currently have a manpower authorization for this student? Will I encounter any long-term manpower issues should I decide to convert my student intern to a permanent position?
5. Is my position eligible for Army Civilian Training Education & Development System (ACTEDS) funding opportunities or will I be using local resources? ACTEDS is a

funding source centrally managed by HQDA to provide funds that may be used to pay for the employment of student interns. HQDA distributes ACTEDS funding to Army organizations through the Army command headquarters. Note: Contact Command HR for assistance with ACTEDS eligibility or funding.

6. Depending on my needs, do I wish to employ a student intern for 1 year or for an initial period expected to last for more than 1 year in order to meet the intern's projected graduation date?
7. Is the permanent position intended for the student intern a professional position for which an individual must have a certain degree and/or specific coursework in order to meet qualification requirements? If so, any selected intern should be enrolled in directly related degree programs in order to be eligible for conversion to the permanent position.
8. Am I looking for a student intern to work a full or part-time schedule? I understand that the work schedule should meet both my and the student intern's needs and that the work schedule must not interfere with his/her academic schedule. I further understand that the work schedule should be arranged to ensure completion of the education program and internship program within a reasonable and appropriate timeframe.

### **Initiating Recruitment Procedures**

9. I understand that I am required to advertise all Pathways opportunities to the public through a posting of a vacancy announcement on USAJOBS. How many days do I wish to have my vacancy announcement posted on USAJOBS? Do I have a career program requirement for the number of days my announcement must be open? A career program is a program which stipulates recruitment, training and career progression requirements for a group of occupational series based on common technical functions and position knowledge, skills and abilities. I understand that all resumes/applications must be submitted through USAJOBS. I also understand that all candidates will be rated using category rating. Category rating is part of the competitive rating process in which applicants who meet basic minimum qualification requirements for the position and whose job related competencies have been assessed are placed in a predefined categories instead of being ranked in numeric score order.
10. What is my recruitment strategy? Have I coordinated with the appropriate HR personnel to discuss a plan forward i.e. attend job fair(s), contacting schools to notify them of the upcoming announcements, etc.? Note: Resumes/applications **cannot** be accepted at events; however, an announcement may be open during an event and attendees may be encouraged to apply. The area of consideration **cannot** be open solely to job fair attendees or students of a particular educational institution. Do I wish to limit my area of consideration to the local commuting area of the duty location of the position?

11. I understand that I must follow specific rules of 5 CFR 302 regarding the consideration of veterans' preference eligibles when selecting a student intern. Qualified veteran's (preference eligibles) will be placed ahead of non-preference eligibles within the same quality category in which they are placed. A non-preference eligible may not be selected if there is a preference eligible in the same category unless approval is obtained to pass over the preference eligible.

### On-boarding

12. Have I provided my student intern with orientation and completed other on-boarding duties to include addressing expectations, educational and work requirements in order to qualify for a potential conversion to permanent employment? Have I explained that service in the Pathways Program confers no right to conversion to a permanent position?
13. Have I established performance goals and documented them in a performance plan? Have I established a method to evaluate my student intern's performance in the program? I understand that this is a **requirement** of the Pathways program.
14. Have I developed and discussed with the student intern on the date of his/her appointment the **required** "Participant Agreement" which covers the following items:
- a. Requirements for continuation and successful completion of the program
  - b. Description of duties
  - c. Work Schedule
  - d. Length of appointment and conversion/termination date
  - e. Information on any special training requirements
  - f. Individual Development Plan (IDP)
  - g. Establishment of performance goals and evaluation procedures to evaluate student intern's performance
  - h. Minimum eligibility requirements for non-competitive conversion to a permanent position

### Program Review

16. Have I been involved in monitoring the student intern's work experience, knowing that generally, the student intern must complete at least 640 work hours while enrolled as a student to be converted to a permanent position? Am I aware of the student intern's educational progress toward obtaining or meeting degree requirements?

17. Do I believe the student intern should be converted to permanent employment?

If I wish to convert my student intern to a permanent position:

- a) Have I discussed minimum qualification requirements for the position to which I wish to convert my student intern with my CPAC, and does my student intern meet them?

- b) I understand that I must convert the intern within 120 days of completion of graduation requirements.
- c) Have I notified the student intern of the decision to convert him/her to a permanent position?
- d) Have I initiated the proper paperwork or process to inform my CPAC of my intentions (i.e., Request for Personnel Action (RPA))?

If I do not wish to convert my student intern to a permanent position, have I:

- a) contacted a Management Employee Relations (MER) specialist at the CPAC to ensure that I follow the proper procedures to separate the student intern?
- b) contacted the CPAC to review my responsibilities for termination of the student intern appointment? (i.e. create an RPA, etc.)
- c) informed the student intern that his/her appointment will be terminated on a given date?

## **Recent Graduates Program**

### **Pre-planning**

1. What specific tasks and duties do I need a recent graduate to perform? Am I looking for a recent college graduate with an associate's, bachelor's, master's, professional, or doctoral degree? Am I looking for a recent graduate from a post-secondary vocational, technical or business school? What grade level(s) do I intend to employ the recent graduate while participating in the program and what will potentially be the proposed grade level if I convert them to a permanent position?
2. Does a position description which covers my needs already exist or must I write a new one?
3. Do I currently have sufficient funding to pay for a recent graduate? Generally, the GS grades could run from GS-1 to GS-12 or equivalent level under another pay and classification system, including wage grade. The appropriate grade level depends on the position and the nature of the participant's educational program. I may appoint my recent graduate to a position at a grade level commensurate with the criteria listed below.
  - a. Up to GS-9 or equivalent to any position for which the recent graduate qualifies for.
  - b. Up to GS-11 for science, technology, engineering, or mathematics occupations (STEM), if the recent graduate possesses a Ph.D or equivalent degree directly related to the STEM position to which converted.

- c. Up to GS-11 for scientific and professional occupations that are research related, if the recent graduate possesses a master's degree or equivalent graduate degree directly related to the position to which converted.
- d. Up to GS-12 for scientific and professional occupations that are research related, if the recent graduate possesses a Ph.D or equivalent degree directly related to the position to which converted.

I also understand that I may convert my recent graduate to a permanent position following successful completion of the Recent Graduates Program and that the permanent position to which I convert my recent graduate must have progressively more responsible duties, providing for career advancement opportunities (i.e., career ladder positions). Will I encounter any long-term budget issues should I decide to convert my recent graduate to a permanent position?

- 4. Do I currently have a manpower authorization for this student? Will I encounter any long-term manpower issues should I decide to convert my student intern to a permanent position?
- 5. Will I have sufficient funding available to execute and maintain the Pathways program requirements which mandate that the recent graduate take 40 hours of formal training to advance the goals and competencies outlined in the participant's Individual Development Plan? Note: Annual mandatory training does NOT count towards the requirement, i.e., information security and ethics.
- 6. Is my position eligible for Army Civilian Training Education & Development System (ACTEDS) funding opportunities or will I be using local resources? ACTEDS is a funding source centrally managed by HQDA to provide funds that may be used to pay for the employment of student interns. HQDA distributes ACTEDS funding to Army organizations through the Army command headquarters. Note: Contact Command HR for assistance with ACTEDS eligibility or funding.
- 7. Have I identified and received approval of a mentor who is outside the participant's chain of command as **required** by the Pathways program? Is the mentor able to provide advice and guidance, including career planning, information on organization culture and other developmental assistance?

### **Initiating Recruitment Procedures**

- 8. I understand that I am required to advertise all Pathways opportunities to the public through a posting of a vacancy announcement on USAJOBS. How many days do I wish to have my vacancy announcement posted on USAJOBS? Do I have a career program requirement for the number of days my announcement must be open? I understand that all resumes/applications must be submitted through USAJOBS. I also understand that all candidates will be rated using category rating. Category rating is part of the competitive rating process in which applicants who meet basic minimum qualification requirements for the position and whose job related

competencies have been assessed are placed in a predefined categories instead of being ranked in numeric score order.

9. What is my recruitment strategy? Have I coordinated with the appropriate HR personnel to discuss a plan forward, i.e., attend job fair, contacting schools to notify them of the upcoming announcements, etc.? Note: Resumes/applications **cannot** be accepted at events; however, an announcement may be open during an event and attendees may be encouraged to apply. The area of consideration **cannot** be open solely to job fair attendees or students of a particular educational institution. Do I wish to limit my area of consideration to the local commuting area of the duty location of the position?
10. I understand that I must follow specific rules of 5 CFR 302 regarding the consideration of veterans' preference eligibles when selecting a student intern. Qualified veteran's (preference eligibles) will be placed ahead of non-preference eligibles within the same quality category in which they are placed. A non-preference eligible may not be selected if there is a preference eligible in the same category unless approval is obtained to pass over the preference eligible.

### **On-boarding**

11. Have I identified at least 40 hours of formal classroom training as **required** by the Pathways program that addresses the core competencies required of the occupation or discipline in which the participant will most likely be placed upon conversion to a permanent position?
12. Have I established performance goals and documented them in a performance plan? Have I established a method to evaluate my student intern's performance in the program? I understand these are **requirements** of the Pathways program.
13. Have I informed my recent graduate of the **requirement** to develop an Individual Development Plan (IDP)? Have I assisted them, as needed? Have I reviewed and approved the recent graduate's IDP within 45 days of appointment? Has the plan been signed by both the recent graduate as well as his/her supervisor?
14. Have I developed and discussed with the recent graduate on the date of his/her appointment, the **required** "Participant Agreement" which covers the following items:
  - a. Description of duties
  - b. Work Schedule
  - c. Length of appointment and conversion/termination date
  - d. Mentorship opportunities; name of official mentor
  - e. 40 hours of formal training
  - f. Individual Development Plan (IDP)
  - g. Establishment of performance goals and evaluation procedures to evaluate recent graduate's performance
  - h. Requirements for continuation and successful completion of the program

- i. Minimum eligibility requirements for non-competitive conversion to a permanent position

### **Program Review**

15. Have I tracked completion of my recent graduate's required training in accordance with his/her IDP to ensure the graduate is on track for program completion and conversion to permanent employment? Have I evaluated the recent graduate's performance? I understand that in order to be converted, my recent graduate must have received a rating of "Fully Successful or equivalent" on his/her performance appraisal.

16. Do I believe the recent graduate should be converted to permanent employment?

If I wish to convert my recent graduate to a permanent position:

- a) I understand that the permanent position to which I convert my recent graduate to must have progressively more responsible duties that provide for career advancement opportunities (i.e, career ladder positions.)
- b) Have I notified the recent graduate of the decision to convert him/her to a permanent position?
- c) Have I initiated the proper paperwork or process to inform my CPAC of my intentions (i.e., Request for Personnel Action (RPA)?

If I do not wish to convert my recent graduate to a permanent position, have I:

- a) contacted a Management Employee Relations (MER) specialist at the CPAC to ensure that I follow the proper procedures to separate the recent graduate?
- b) contacted the CPAC to review my responsibilities for termination of the recent graduate appointment? (i.e. create and RPA, etc.)
- c) informed the recent graduate that his/her appointment will be terminated on a given date?