



Everything You Need To Know About Noncompetitive Eligibility

A guide for federal agencies

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If you have any questions about noncompetitive eligibility, please write or call:

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Office of Third Goal and Returned Volunteer Services
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HireRPCVs@peacecorps.gov

What Is Noncompetitive Eligibility?

Noncompetitive eligibility (NCE) is a special hiring mechanism through which RPCVs (returned Peace Corps Volunteers) and Peace Corps staff can be appointed to certain federal positions without competing with the general public in order to be hired. Thus, federal agencies can hire an RPCV or former Peace Corps employee without posting a vacancy announcement, screening or interviewing candidates, or going through the others steps that are involved in the standard recruitment process. All that is required is that the agencies have a classified position, an available opening, and that the candidate meets the minimum qualifications for that position. **Hiring candidates with NCE can significantly cut down the amount of time and money it takes to fill a vacancy in your agency.**



Who Has Noncompetitive Eligibility?

Noncompetitive eligibility is extended to two groups of individuals:
returned Peace Corps Volunteers and
Peace Corps staff

NCE for returned Peace Corps Volunteers:

Returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCVs) who have successfully completed their service are granted one year of noncompetitive eligibility for federal appointments, under Executive Order 11103 (see appendix, p. 6). This special eligibility is of particular use to federal employers due to the special qualifications of RPCVs and the speed and ease with which they may be hired. The certification for noncompetitive eligibility is contained in the RPCV's description of Peace Corps Service (DOS). This document is signed by the country director of the RPCV's country of service.

- Noncompetitive eligibility allows a federal agency to hire a returned Peace Corps Volunteer as long as s/he meets the minimum qualifications for a position. The RPCV need not be the most qualified candidate.
- Noncompetitive candidates need not be on a register.
- Noncompetitive eligibility can be used to fill both posted and non-posted vacancies, depending upon the individual agency's or department's personnel policies. What most personnel departments do, in the case of announced vacancies, is send the selecting official a ranked list of competitive candidates as well as a list of all noncompetitive applicants.
- Noncompetitive eligibility for competitive service positions is authorized by Title 5 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 315.605 (see appendix, p. 7), and rules 32-33 of Table 9-G (see appendix, p. 9) in the Guide to Processing Personnel Actions.
- Noncompetitive eligibility may be extended for up to three years from the RPCV's close of service date. Reasons for extension for an RPCV include: service in the military; attendance as a full-time student at a recognized institution of higher learning; engagement in an activity that makes the RPCV more qualified for the position or for any reason the hiring agency thinks warrants an extension.

NCE for Peace Corps Employees:

Peace Corps staff members are also granted noncompetitive eligibility under Title 5 of the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations, Part 315.607 (see appendix, p. 8). Peace Corps staff members who have successfully completed 36 months of continuous service without a break in service of three days or more earn the status of noncompetitive eligibility (NCE) in applying for other federal positions.

- Qualified Peace Corps staff members retain this status for three years from the date that they separate from the Peace Corps.
- Noncompetitive eligibility affords qualified staff the opportunity to be considered without competition for positions in the competitive service, e.g. federal civil service positions.
- Peace Corps staff members receive a certifying document of this status from Peace Corps' Director of Human Resources Management. A copy is placed in their Official Personnel Folder.
- Peace Corps employees with this status should submit a copy of the certifying document along with employment applications to federal employers.





Leveraging NCE to Hire Returned Peace Corps Volunteers and Transitioning Peace Corps Staff Members

Peace Corps' Office of Third Goal and Returned Volunteer Services (RVS) offers federal agencies the following FREE mechanisms to put them in touch with candidates eligible for noncompetitive appointment:

1. RPCV Career Link

- Agencies post a vacancy announcement for a position they wish to fill non-competitively to www.peacecorps.gov/rpcvcareerlink. (Please check "NCE" box.)
- The announcement appears free of charge on RPCV Career Link.
- Status candidates apply directly to the agency or to a standard online vacancy posting

2. Washington, D.C. and Regional Career Fairs

- RVS hosts career fairs twice a year in Washington, DC, for 200-300 RPCVs
- RVS also hosts regional career fairs in major U.S. cities
- Contact us at HireRPCVs to subscribe to our employer emails and receive notification when we're accepting employer registrations for upcoming career fairs.
- Agencies can attend all fairs FREE OF CHARGE and network with candidates who have NCE

3. Employer Information Sessions

- Agencies host a group of RPCVs to present their mission and opportunities
- Agency representatives designate the date, time, and location for the session; RVS manages advertising and registration

4. Targeted Hiring Events

- Agencies identify managers who have open positions and invite them to interview status candidates at a hiring event on a date of the agencies' choosing
- Agencies host the event, and RVS manages the marketing and registration of eligible RPCVs

NCE and RPCV Career Link - Effective ways to recruit!

Since launching in January 2013, over twenty-five federal agencies have posted NCE jobs on RPCV Career Link (see item 1 on the left).

The following agencies have hired multiple candidates using this service:

- Department of Education
- Department of State
- Environmental Protection Agency
- Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
- General Services Administration
- Social Security Administration

"...as of 1/31/11, the EEOC's Chicago District Office added 17 new federal investigators to its staff. Of that number, 76% were NCE hires recruited via Peace Corps. The talent and experience possessed by each NCE hire is exceptional. More importantly, each RPCV brings a uniquely global perspective and commitment to the agency's mission of eradicating employment discrimination. Our relationship with the Peace Corps has been remarkable, and our successful recruiting efforts have set a benchmark for EEOC offices nationwide. Without exception, partnering with the Peace Corps continues to be a win-win situation."

- Debra Wilson-Sumbry, District Resources Manager
U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission



The Face of the Peace Corps: The Face of Your Workforce

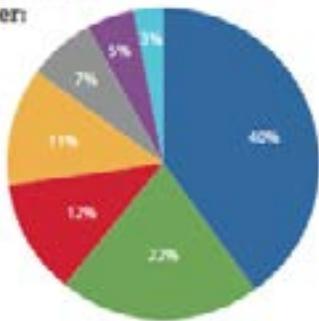
The men and women who join the Peace Corps reflect the rich diversity of the United States. Today's Peace Corps is more vital than ever. Peace Corps Volunteers help countless individuals who want to build better lives for themselves, their children, and their communities. Qualifications for Peace Corps service are as expansive and varied as the pressing issues facing our world today.

Returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCVs) are a valuable addition to your organization:

- RPCVs have diverse backgrounds in such fields as education, business, environment, agriculture, and health.
- RPCVs have varying degrees of experience, and therefore are looking for entry-level, mid-level, and senior-level positions.
- Most are bilingual; many are multilingual.
- Many have advanced degrees.

Peace Corps Program Sectors:

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| ● Education: | 40% |
| ● Health: | 22% |
| ● Environment: | 12% |
| ● Community Economic Development: | 11% |
| ● Youth in Development: | 7% |
| ● Agriculture: | 5% |
| ● Other: | 3% |



Peace Corps Today

Peace Corps Director: Carrie Hessler-Radelet
(RPCV/Samoa, 1981-1983)

Peace Corps Volunteers (PCVs)

- Host countries: 65
- Volunteers and trainees: 7.209
- Gender: 63% female, 37% male
- Minorities: 24%
- Average age: 28.7
- Volunteers over 50: 8%

Returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCVs)

- Over 3,500 Volunteers return to the U.S. each year with demonstrated technical, cross-cultural, and interpersonal skills.
- Of these, the majority are eligible for noncompetitive appointment to federal positions (see www.peacecorps.gov/nce).
- Many RPCVs go on to earn graduate degrees in such fields as education, public health, administration, and international affairs.

Peace Corps Staff Members

- Approximately 43% of staff members are returned Volunteers.
- Peace Corps staff members who have been employed by the agency for three years are eligible for noncompetitive appointment to federal positions (see www.peacecorps.gov/nce).



RPCV Skills and Qualifications

Peace Corps Volunteers fill a wide variety of openings throughout the world in: Education, Youth, and Community Development; Health and HIV/AIDS; Environment and Agriculture; Business Development and Information Technology. Peace Corps places volunteers based largely on matching their educational and work experiences with the kinds of projects with which countries have requested assistance.

RPCVs are a valuable addition to any organization:

- RPCVs have diverse backgrounds and are looking for positions in various sectors at varying levels.
- Through their service, RPCVs have gained not only a breadth of technical knowledge in their sectors, but also strong verbal and written communication, training, planning, and international and community development skills.
- RPCVs have also gained intangible skills such as leadership, ingenuity, resourcefulness, critical thinking, and strategic planning through their Peace Corps service.
- RPCVs have experience living and working in developing countries, and have strong cross-cultural and interpersonal skills.



Noncompetitive Eligibility Executive Order 11103

Providing for the Appointment of Former Peace Corps Volunteers to the Civilian Career Services (April 10, 1963)

By virtue of the authority vested in me by the Civil Service Act (22 Stat. 403), and section 1753 of the Revised Statutes, and as President of the United States, it is hereby ordered as follows:

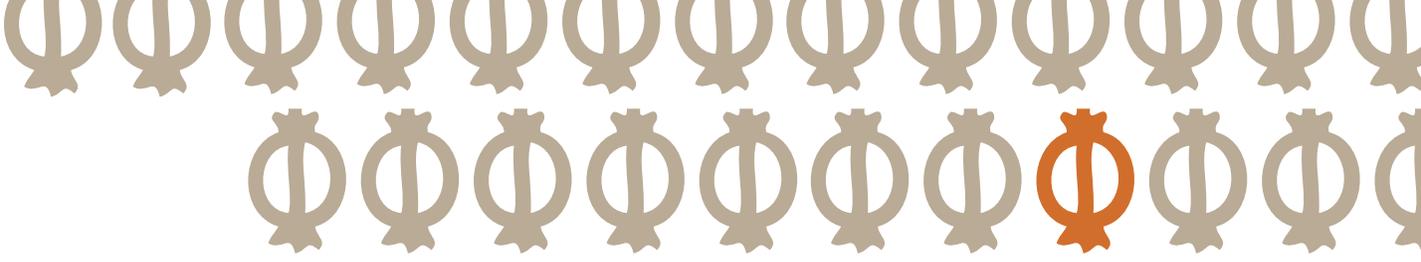
SEC. 1. Under such regulations as the Civil Service Commission may prescribe, the head of any agency in the Executive Branch may appoint in the competitive service any person who is certified by the Director of the Peace Corps as having served satisfactorily as a Volunteer or Volunteer Leader under the Peace Corps Act and who passes such examination as the Civil Service Commission [Office of Personnel Management] may prescribe. Any person so appointed shall, upon completion of the prescribed probationary period, acquire a competitive status.

SEC. 2. The head of any agency in the Executive Branch having an established merit system in the excepted service may appoint in such service any person who is certified by the Director of the Peace Corps as having served satisfactorily as a Volunteer or Volunteer Leader under the Peace Corps Act and who passes such examination as such agency head may prescribe.

SEC. 3. Certificates of satisfactory service for the purposes of this Order shall be issued only to persons who have completed a full term of service (approximately two years) under the Peace Corps Act: Provided, that such certificates may be issued to persons who have completed a lesser period of satisfactory service if, in the judgment of the Director of the Peace Corps, (1) their service was of sufficient duration to demonstrate their capability to complete satisfactorily a full term, and (2) their failure to complete a full term was due to circumstances beyond their control.

SEC. 4. Any appointment under this Order shall be effected within a period of one year after completion of the appointee's service under the Peace Corps Act: Provided, That such period may be extended to not more than three years in the case of persons who, following such service, are engaged in military service, in the pursuit of studies at a recognized institution of higher learning, or in other activities which, in the view of the appointing authority, warrant an extension of such period.

SEC. 5. Any law, Executive Order, or regulation which would disqualify an applicant for appointment in the competitive service or in the excepted service concerned shall also disqualify an applicant for appointment under this Order.



5 C.F.R. § 315.605

Appointment of former ACTION* volunteers

Title 5 - Administrative Personnel

*This applies to returned Peace Corps Volunteers, who - at the time this legislation was written - served under a federal agency called ACTION (which also included Volunteers in Service to America, or VISTA, now an AmeriCorps program).

(a) Agency authority. An agency in the executive branch may appoint noncompetitively, for other than temporary employment, a person whom the Director of ACTION certifies as having served satisfactorily as a volunteer or volunteer leader under the Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2051 et seq.), or as a VISTA volunteer under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2991 et seq.) or the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973 (Pub. L. 93-113), or as a full-time community volunteer (including criminal justice volunteer, volunteer in justice, and VET REACH volunteer) under part C of title I of Pub. L. 93-113. To be qualifying under this section VISTA and community volunteer service must total at least 1 year. In addition, a community volunteer must have served prior to October 1, 1976.

(b) Time limit. An agency in the executive branch may make an appointment under this section only within 1 year after the person completes the qualifying service. (For Community volunteers who have completed their service before March 10, 1978, the 1-year period begins on March 10, 1978.) However, an agency may extend the period for 2 more years to a total of 3 years if the person, after the qualifying service, is:

- (1) In the military service;
- (2) Studying at a recognized institution of higher learning; or
- (3) In another activity which, in the agency's view, warrants extension.

(c) Conditions. Any law, Executive order, or regulation that disqualifies an applicant for appointment also disqualifies an applicant for appointment under this section.

(d) Tenure on appointment.

- (1) Except as provided in paragraph (d)(2) of this section, a person appointed under paragraph (a) of this section becomes a career-conditional employee.
- (2) A person appointed under paragraph (a) or this section becomes a career employee if excepted from the service requirement for career tenure by §315.201(c).

(e) Acquisition of competitive status. A person appointed under paragraph (a) of this section acquires a competitive status automatically on completion of probation.

[39 FR 961, Jan. 4, 1974, as amended at 43 FR 20954, May 16, 1978; 43 FR 34428, Aug. 4, 1978]

5 C.F.R. § 315.607

Noncompetitive appointment of present and former Peace Corps personnel

Title 5 - Administrative Personnel

(a) An agency in the executive branch may appoint noncompetitively, for other than temporary appointment, an individual:

(1) Who has completed no less than 36 months of continuous service without a break in service of 3 days or more under section 7(a) of the Peace Corps Act (22 U.S.C. 2506) which pertains to the appointment of Peace Corps staff (not volunteers);

(2) Whom the Director of the Peace Corps certifies as having satisfactorily served under such an appointment; and

(3) Who meets OPM qualification standards—including any written test requirements—for the position in question.

(4) Who is not a Peace Corps volunteer as this paragraph does not apply to Peace Corps volunteers.

(b) Time limitations.

(1) An individual's eligibility under this section extends through September 30, 1982, or until 3 years after separation from qualifying service with the Peace Corps, whichever is later.

(2) An agency may not extend this period.

(c) Conditions. Any law, Executive order, or regulation which disqualifies an applicant for appointment in the competitive service also disqualifies an applicant for appointment under this section.

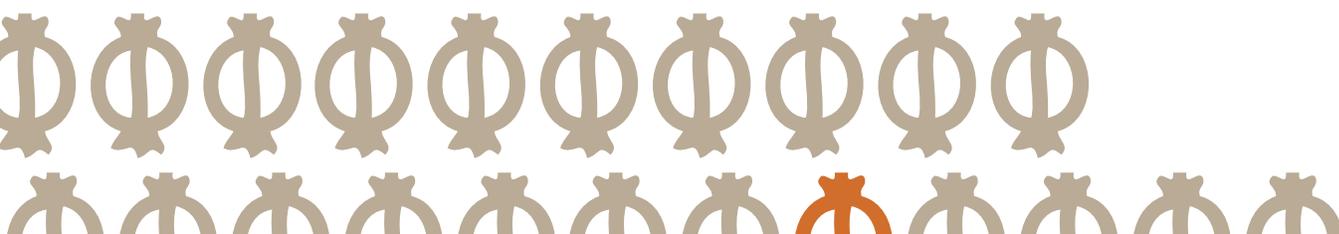
(d) Acquisition of competitive status. A person appointed under paragraph (a) of this section acquires competitive status automatically upon completion of probation.

(e) Tenure on appointment.

(1) Except as provided in paragraph (e)(2) of this section, a person appointed under paragraph (a) of this section becomes a career-conditional employee.

(2) A person appointed under paragraph (a) of this section becomes a career employee if excepted from the service requirement for career tenure by §315.201(c).

[45 FR 43365, June 27, 1980, as amended at 46 FR 35079, July 7, 1981; 54 FR 37092, Sept. 7, 1989]



U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) The Guide To Processing Personnel Actions

Table 9-G. Appointment Based on Circumstances or Authorities Not Covered in Tables 9-A through 9-F

<http://www.opm.gov/feddata/gppa/gppa09.pdf>

(For RPCVs: refer to rules 32 and 33)

(For Peace Corps staff: refer to rules 28 and 29)

| <i>RULE</i> | <i>If the Appointment is Based On</i> | <i>And the Person</i> | <i>And the Appointment Is</i> | <i>Then NOAC Is</i> | <i>NOA Is</i> | <i>Auth Code Is</i> | <i>Authority Is (See Note 1 of this table)</i> |
|-------------|--|--|-------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|--|
| >28< | Satisfactory completion of 36 months of substantially continuous service under Section 7(a) of the Peace Corps Act | Is not on your agency's rolls | Career | 100 | Career Appt | LJM | Reg. 315.607 |
| >29< | | | Career-Conditional | 101 | Career-Cond Appt | | |
| >30< | | Is already on the rolls of your agency | Career | 500 | Conv to Career Appt | | |
| >31< | | | Career-Conditional | 501 | Conv to Career-Cond Appt | | |
| >32< | Service as a Peace Corps, VISTA, or ACTION Community Volunteer | Is not on your agency's rolls | Career | 100 | Career Appt | LEM | Reg. 315.605 |
| >33< | | | Career-Conditional | 101 | Career-Cond Appt | | |
| >34< | | Is already on the rolls of your agency | Career | 500 | Conv to Career Appt | | |
| >35< | | | Career-Conditional | 501 | Conv to Career-Cond Appt | | |
| >36< | Three years of satisfactory service on a Schedule A or B appointment as a Criminal Investigator (Special Agent) with the Drug Enforcement Administration | | Career | 500 | Conv to Career Appt | ZMM | E.O. 12230 |

If you have any questions about noncompetitive eligibility, please contact:

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