

# ARKANSAS NATIONAL GUARD

## HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE



### MERIT PLACEMENT PLAN 01 May 2012



# ***SUMMARY of CHANGE***

TPP 2012-01

Merit Placement Plan

- o Makes administrative changes throughout.
- o Clarifies the requirement for original signatures on applications and allows digital signatures to also be accepted.
- o Clarifies the difference between Requesting Official, Authorizing Official and Hiring Authority.
- o Changes the requirement for Requesting Officials to return selection packages from 30 days to 15 days. Also gives HRO the ability to cancel positions out past 30 days.
- o Eliminates “Indefinite” as a type of position and further clarifies “Temporary” positions. Also requires all temporary positions to have a Not to Exceed date.
- o Increases the amount of applications that can be forwarded on Technician positions from five applications to ten applications without requiring an evaluation panel.
- o Adds requirement for MEDPROS/AF Form 422 to be added to Technician application packages.
- o Adds Section 7 to clarify Competitive Service (Non-Dual Status) positions.

**MILITARY DEPARTMENT OF ARKANSAS  
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL  
NORTH LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS 72199-9600**

**Civilian Personnel Merit Placement Plan for Excepted Service and Competitive Service  
Technicians  
Human Resources Office (HRO)**

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## SECTION 1. GENERAL

### **1-1. REFERENCES:**

- a. National Guard Bureau (NGB) Technician Personnel Regulation 335, Merit Promotion Placement for National Guard Technicians
- b. NGB Technician Personnel Regulation 303, National Guard Technician Dual Status Compatibility
- c. 32 USC 709
- d. 5 CFR (Code of Federal Regulations) sections 302 & 335

**1-2. PURPOSE:** The Merit Placement Plan establishes policies and procedures for filling all Excepted Service (Dual-Status) and Competitive Service (Non-Dual Status) new appointments with qualified applicants and provides the opportunity for current agency employees to compete for advancement. The Merit Placement Plan complies with the merit placement requirements set forth by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and instructions published by NGB. In addition, the Merit Placement Plan reflects the views, recommendations, and contributions of managers, employees, and employee representatives of this agency. Active Guard Reserve (AGR) placement policies, procedures, and guidance are covered in National Guard Regulation (NGR) 600-5, Army Regulation (AR) 135-18, Air National Guard Instruction (ANGI) 36-101 and the AGR Handbook.

**1-3. POLICY:** It is the policy of the Arkansas National Guard that all Technician positions be filled by the best qualified individuals available and ensure that all Technicians have an opportunity to develop and advance to their full potential. All Technician vacancies will be filled on the basis of merit and job-related factors. All actions under the Merit Placement Plan will be made without discrimination for non-merit reasons such as race, color, religion, sex, national origin, marital status, membership or non-membership in an employee organization, age, and non-disqualifying physical handicap (except military requirements for military Technicians).

**1-4. APPLICATION:** The Merit Placement Plan applies to supervisory and non-supervisory General Schedule (GS) and Federal Wage System (WG, WL, WS) Excepted Service and Competitive Service positions of the Arkansas National Guard.

**1-5. NEGOTIATED AGREEMENTS:** Where the provisions of local negotiated agreements differ from the provisions of the Merit Placement Plan, **the negotiated provision will take precedence.**

**1-6. REGULATIONS OF HIGHER AUTHORITIES:** Where the Merit Placement Plan is silent regarding certain aspects of the Merit Placement Program, the provisions of current collective bargaining agreements or law, rule or regulation will apply, as appropriate.

**1-7. PROGRAM INFORMATION:** The Freedom of Information Act and the Privacy Act impact significantly on the collection, use, and availability of data essential to operations under the Merit Placement Plan. The Human Resources Officer will ensure that all actions under the Merit Placement Plan conform to these laws.

**1-8. DEFINITIONS:**

a. **Excepted Service (Dual Status) Technicians:** Technicians who are required to be members of the National Guard as a condition of employment. Individuals must be assigned to and maintain a compatible military unit of assignment and Military Occupational Specialty (MOS)/Air Force Specialty Code (AFSC) as determined by NGB (reference Technician Personnel Regulation (TPR) 303 Military Technician Compatibility) unless an approved waiver is granted through HRO by NGB. If the individual is not assigned to a compatible military unit of assignment and MOS/AFSC at the time of selection, management will work with the employee to become compatible within one (1) year of the effective date of employment.

b. **Competitive Service (Non-Dual Status) Technicians:** Technicians who are not required to be members of the National Guard as a condition of employment. These positions are advertised through OPM and are posted on [USAjobs.gov](http://USAjobs.gov).

c. **Area of Consideration (Dual Status Announcements only):** The area of consideration describes the individuals from whom the 'state' will accept applications to compete for the position. If an applicant is not within the area of consideration, or otherwise eligible for a non-competitive consideration (i.e. Priority Placement), the 'state' will not consider the application. The first area of consideration will be in accordance with the Labor-Management Agreement of the unit or activity advertising the position (for bargaining unit positions only), however, The Adjutant General may set the area of consideration to include consideration of all qualified candidates most likely to enhance attainment of mission objectives of the Arkansas National Guard. Normally, areas of consideration will be established as follows:

(1) Air National Guard Technicians Statewide or Army National Guard Technicians Statewide.

(2) All members of the Arkansas Army National Guard (ARNG)/Air National Guard (ANG).

(3) Individuals who are not members of the National Guard, but who are eligible to acquire membership in an available and compatible military assignment for Excepted Service Technician positions.

d. **Applicants:** Eligible applicants are those individuals' whose applications that are deemed 'eligible' for further review/consideration by being in or meeting the area of consideration parameters.

e. **Candidates:** Successful candidates are those applicants who meet basic qualification standards, and positive educational requirements; and, if DS, meet military appointment and compatibility requirements.

f. **Job-Related Criteria:** The combination of factors that position descriptions have shown to be important for performance of a specific position, (or group of positions analyzed as having identical important factors) and for which performance analysis has shown are valid indicators of differences between more and less successful workers. The total set of criteria includes all knowledge, skills, abilities and personal characteristics that meet job and performance analysis requirements for the position.

g. **Rating of Candidates:** The process of assessing the qualifications of candidates to determine basic eligibility and the degree to which they possess the KSAs required for successful performance in the job to be filled.

h. **Best Qualified Candidates:** The highest ranking candidates placed on a selection register by the Human Resources Office (HRO) Recruitment and Placement Specialist or evaluation panel, who are referred to the Requesting Official for his/her consideration/action.

i. **Requesting Official:** This person is annotated in the "Action Requested By" block of the SF 52. Normally, the first-level supervisor of the announced position vacancy who nominates the appointee from the best qualified candidates. If the Requesting Official is not available to interview or nominate a candidate, due to TDY, deployment, illness etc. for periods in excess of 15 days, the next line supervisor may act as the Requesting Official (written justification must be submitted with the selection package). The Requesting Official submits his/her nomination to the authorizing official for authorization.

j. **Authorizing Official:** This person is annotated in the "Action Authorized By" block of the SF 52. Normally, the second-level supervisor of the announced position vacancy who authorizes the nomination made by the requesting official. In the event the authorizing official does not concur with the nomination, justification from both the requesting official and authorizing official will be forwarded to HRO for determination.

k. **Hiring Authority:** The Adjutant General is the hiring authority for the Arkansas National Guard Technician Program. The Adjutant General may delegate this authority and the authority to sign as the approver on the SF 52 to the Human Resources Officer. No action is final until The Adjutant General or his delegated representative approves it.

l. **Promotion:** The movement of a current, qualified Technician to a different position of higher grade (or higher rate of pay, if under a different pay system).

m. **Reassignment:** The change of a Technician from one position to another for which the Technician is qualified, without promotion or demotion.

n. **Change to a Lower Grade:** Movement of a Technician to a position at a lower grade (or rate of pay, if under a different pay system).



o. **Detail:** The temporary assignment of a worker to a different position for a specified period not to exceed 120 days, without change in the worker's pay status, and with the worker returning to his or her regular duties at the end of the detail. A position is not "filled" by a detail, as the worker continues to be the incumbent of the position from which detailed. The worker is not required to meet qualification requirements for the position to which detailed.

p. **Priority Consideration:** Consideration of certain individuals before others are considered. This does not ensure selection, but insures that the affected Technician will receive consideration for vacancies for which qualified, prior to normal placement action. Individuals affected will be notified of their consideration when such action occurs.

q. **Placement Factors:** The Knowledge, Skill and Ability (KSA) Factors: Characteristics deemed to be absolutely essential for satisfactory performance in the job which is used to identify high quality candidates for referral to the requesting official.

r. **Priority Placement:** An exception to competitive promotion procedures. This action will precede normal placement actions to allow Technicians entitled to grade retention to be re-promoted to positions for which they meet the Technician qualification requirements.

s. **Qualification Standards:** Standards which control the movement of employees into and within the Federal service by prescribing the experience, skills, knowledge, and abilities required for filling positions. Qualification standards for Excepted Service positions in the National Guard have been established locally along guidelines established by NGB and published separately from the position descriptions under the title "National Guard Technician Qualification Requirements." For Competitive Service positions, the standards are found in the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Qualification Standards Handbook for General Schedule Positions and Wage Grade Positions.

t. **Reinstatement:** The noncompetitive reemployment of a person formerly employed in the Competitive Service who had a Competitive status or held a permanent Excepted appointment in the Excepted Service for over three (3) consecutive years. Individual being reinstated may be placed in a position at the grade equal to or lower than the grade they previously held.

u. **Tenure Groups:** Tenure groups are the categories in which Technicians are grouped based on length of employment and completion of probationary/trial periods.

(1) Tenure Group 0. Temporary Technicians who serve less than 12 months in a temporary position in the Excepted Service. Technicians coded as tenure 0 are not eligible for benefits.

(2) Tenure Group I. Permanent, Competitive Service (Non-Dual Status) Technicians with career status, who have successfully completed their three year probationary period, and permanent, Excepted Service (Dual Status) Technicians who have successfully completed their one year trial period.

(3) Tenure Group II. Permanent Technicians who are serving a trial or probationary period. This category includes Competitive Service Technicians with career-conditional status and

Excepted Service Technicians who have not completed their one year trial period. Competitive Service Technicians under career appointments who must serve a probationary period are also tenure II.

(4) Tenure Group III. Temporary Technicians who serve more than 12 consecutive months in a temporary position in the Excepted Service will be coded as tenure III (Indefinite). Technicians coded as tenure III may be eligible for certain benefits.

v. **Grade Retention:** The right of an employee to retain for two years, for pay and benefit purposes, the grade of the position from which he or she was reduced.

w. **Pay Retention:** The right of an employee to retain, under certain circumstances, a rate of basic pay higher than the maximum rate of the grade for the position occupied.

x. **Manpower Change Request (MCR):** A request for the assignment of manpower or changes to manpower authorizations (i.e. changing a funded Technician position to an AGR position or vice-versa). MCRs can only be accomplished on Air National Guard (ANG) positions.

y. **Permanent Change of Station (PCS):** Travel and transportation allowance payable when it is in the Government's interest to fill a position. Only one PCS move is allowed during any 12-month period per individual.

z. **Conditions of Employment:** Personnel policies, practices, and matters, whether established by rule, regulation, or otherwise [e.g., by custom or practice], affecting working conditions.

### **1-9. RESPONSIBILITIES:**

a. The Adjutant General is the appointing authority for the Arkansas National Guard Technician Program and is the highest level of authority in the State concerning the overall application of the Merit Placement Plan.

b. The Human Resources Officer of the HRO is responsible to the Adjutant General for insuring that the requirements of the Merit Placement Plan are carried out. The HRO will:

- (1) Develop, maintain, evaluate and revise the program as necessary.
- (2) Assure compliance with the Merit Placement Plan.
- (3) Provide guidance and assistance to Managers and Supervisors concerning their responsibilities under the Merit Placement Plan.
- (4) Assure that candidates are properly evaluated and certified for placement.
- (5) Maintain necessary records.

c. Managers and Supervisors will:

- (1) Assure that Technicians under their supervision are aware of the Merit Placement Plan.
- (2) Assure that actions effected within their area of responsibility are based on merit without discrimination.
- (3) Encourage Technicians under their supervision to participate in developmental opportunities and to apply for the positions for which qualified.
- (4) Recommend changes to the Merit Placement Plan to HRO.
- (5) Assure that Technicians under their supervision, who are absent (military duty, service schools, etc.), are knowledgeable of advertised positions for which they are qualified.

d. Individual Technicians are responsible for:

- (1) Pursuing developmental opportunities in preparing to assume higher level duties.
- (2) Familiarizing themselves with the provisions of the Merit Placement Plan.
- (3) Arranging with their Supervisors to submit applications for vacancies when temporarily absent from their jobs.

**1-10. MANAGEMENT'S RIGHTS:** Recognizing that it is essential to the accomplishment of the mission of the Arkansas National Guard that Technician positions be filled with the best qualified individuals available, management retains the right to make selections for appointments from:

- a. Among properly ranked and certified candidates for promotion.
- b. Any other appropriate source.

## SECTION 2. EXCEPTIONS TO COMPETITION

**2-1. PERSONNEL ACTIONS EXEMPT FROM COMPETITION:** Certain Technician placement actions provide the authorization for qualified candidates to be placed in a position without competition. These actions are:

a. Key Staff Positions: The effectiveness of National Guard management within the State of Arkansas depends, in large measure, on the quality of the personnel assigned to The Adjutant General. The requirements for successful performance in key staff positions, both military and Technician, are different from those in other supervisory Technician positions. The Adjutant General has the authority to non-competitively appoint military Technicians, AGR members, and traditional Guard members into Key Staff positions.

b. Promotion of a Technician whose position is upgraded because of a change in classification standards, or job enlargement resulting from increased difficulty, variety or complexity of duties and responsibilities, or to correct a classification error.

c. Promotion of a Technician who satisfactorily completes a formal training program required for promotion, provided selection of the Technician for the training program was made under the competitive process of the Merit Placement Plan, or under the "Upward Mobility" concept of the State Upward Mobility Plan.

d. Re-promotion of a Technician previously demoted without personal cause to a position for which qualified. The promotion cannot be above the grade level or equivalent of the position from which demoted. This includes Technicians separated by reduction-in-force and re-employed at a lower grade; entitled to grade retention as a result of reduction-in-force or reclassification; or downgraded for the purpose of entering a training program in an "Upward Mobility" position, provided the competitive process of the Merit Placement Plan was used for selection.

e. Reassignment of a Technician, by reason of reduction-in-force, to a position resulting in a salary increase. If it is not a promotion, as determined by the HRO, reassignment may be made outside the provisions of the Merit Placement Plan.

f. Management Directed Reassignment of a Technician from one position to a position of equal grade is not considered a promotion and is exempt from the provisions of the Merit Placement Plan; however, if the vacant position is one with known promotion potential, the merit promotion provisions of the Merit Placement Plan will apply.

g. Promotion on a temporary basis of 120 days or less may be made without consideration of merit promotion policies, when no exceptions are provided in the applicable Labor-Management Agreement. Temporary promotions that exceed 120 days must be advertised.

h. Career promotion where original selection was made under merit principles and the known promotion potential was indicated in the vacancy announcement.

i. Restoration of a Technician, from Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP) rolls, when it is determined the individual is able to return to work and Technician meets qualification requirements.

j. Demotion to position of no greater promotion potential.

k. Change to lower grade, at the request of an individual, to a position with no higher promotion potential than the highest grade previously held.

l. Details not to exceed 120 days. Extensions of details to higher graded positions with known promotion potential must be processed under competitive procedures.

m. Temporary Appointments limited to 120 days or less. These appointments are primarily intended to provide temporary workload relief during the period of the competitive hiring process, to reduce backlogs, provide relief for unexpected workloads, or to overlap an incumbent due to illness, injury, retirement, separation, or mobilization. Work requirements in excess of 120 days must be filled through a competitive process. To place a temporary employee under these provisions, a SF 52 and an OF Form 612 or a resume must be submitted to HRO. All temporary Technicians must meet the minimum specialized experience criteria for the position they are to fill. Temporary Technicians are not considered "onboard employees" for Area of Consideration purposes on Equal Opportunity Announcements (EOAs).

n. Actions involving regulatory or administrative placements, including actions directed by higher "command" levels, arbitration decisions, court decisions, negotiated settlements and discrimination complaint decisions.

## SECTION 3. POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT AND APPLICATION PROCEDURES

**3-1. REQUEST FOR FILLING VACANCY:** The first step in filling vacant positions is for the supervisor to submit a Standard Form (SF) 52 “Request For Personnel Action” to HRO. For examples on completing this form, please visit the HRO web site at [www.arguard.org](http://www.arguard.org). The Position Description (PD) of the vacant position will provide the basis for some decisions when filling out this form, such as type of appointment, authorized military grade, Technician grade, skills, etc. Supervisors must annotate the following, as appropriate, on the SF 52:

- a. Position title, job number, civilian grade(s), activity, and location.
- b. Action requested, requested by, and approved by. Additionally, ANG units must have annotated approval from the appropriate Comptroller on the SF 52, since these resources are managed at the Wing level.
- c. Recommended area of consideration (Onboard only or New Hire).
- d. Military requirement: Must specify Officer, Warrant Officer and/or Enlisted. (NOTE: The PD will determine the military requirement options; Requesting Official may choose any or all options).
- e. Type of appointment:
  - (1) **Permanent** - Excepted Service (Dual Status) or Competitive Service (Non-Dual Status)
  - (2) **Temporary** – Position based upon availability of funds, not to exceed completion of project or one year (whichever occurs first). **All temporary positions must have a not to exceed date.** This appointment may be extended up to a maximum of one additional year for a total of two years upon approval of the Human Resources Office. To request an extension, the supervisor must submit a SF 52 to HRO along with justification as to why the extension is necessary. Temporary employees with less than 1 year of continuous service are not eligible for the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP). After the completion of 1 year of continuous employment with less than 5 days’ break in service, temporary employees are eligible for the FEHBP, but they receive no Government contribution toward the premium (the Government contribution is approximately 70 percent of the premium for permanent employees.) Temporary employees do not receive “step increases”. Temporary Technicians are not considered “onboard employees” for Area of Consideration purposes on Equal Opportunity Announcements (EOAs).
- f. Appropriate military grade or range of grades permissible. Grade inversion rules must be taken into consideration (Note: In accordance with Technician Personnel Regulation (TPR) 302.7, paragraph 7-10(c), a military Technician may not be militarily senior in rank to his or her full-time supervisor.)

g. AFSC or MOS required within the guidelines established by the NGB Compatibility criteria and ANG Unit Manning Document (UMD).

h. Selective placement factors such as required military skill level, minimum military grade, and earliest fill date.

i. Conditions of employment. These will be listed under the QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS on the announcement and include such conditions as rotating shifts, driver's license requirements, and ability to obtain appropriate security clearance.

j. Previous employee assigned to the position or pending loss must be listed as "vice" on the SF-52 along with the reason why the employee vacated the position. If this is a new or previously unfilled position, indicate such on the SF-52.

k. Air National Guard vacancies may be dual announced (AGR and Technician) as allowed by the Position Description (PD) and UMD. ARNG positions may not be dual announced. ARNG employment resources and authorities may not be changed without The Adjutant General's approval based on the ARNG Manpower Authorization Voucher. **Dual announcements will not be permitted if an AGR and Technician resource is not available at the time the Request For Fill is submitted to the HRO for action (both resources must be available and approved for use).** Additionally, a MCR must be submitted through the HRO and ANG Headquarters (HQ) and approved by NGB prior to placement.

**3-2. VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Vacancy announcements will be used in competitive actions to locate applicants for all positions covered by the Merit Placement Plan. Vacancy announcements will be published by the Human Resources Office and emailed to the Requesting Official or point of contact. **Copies will be posted at the Human Resources Office, on all official bulletin boards, and on the HRO website ([www.arguard.org](http://www.arguard.org)).** Vacancies will be announced or posted for a minimum of 15 calendar days with a 30-day maximum. Exceptions will be fully justified and must be approved by the Human Resources Officer.

a. By signing the "Request for Personnel Action" SF-52, supervisors are agreeing to the statement that "this vacant position has been reviewed as required by the position management plan and I certify it to be accurately described and necessary."

b. The vacancy announcement will contain the following information as a minimum:

(1) Title, series, grade and salary range of the position.

(2) Type of appointment: Excepted Service, Competitive Service, or AGR.

(3) Military Requirements: Officer, Warrant Officer, Enlisted and grade/MOS/AFSC compatibility requirements.

(4) Organization and geographical location of position.

- (5) Area of consideration.
- (6) Announcement number.
- (7) Opening and closing dates.
- (8) Summary of duties and minimum qualification requirements.
- (9) KSAs necessary for successful performance in the position.
- (10) Special conditions of employment (i.e. security clearance, National Agency Check with Inquiries (NACI) or pre-placement physical).
- (11) Instructions for applying.
- (12) Unit of military assignment and projected military grade, if known.
- (13) Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) statement. This following statement is required verbatim on all announcements: **“THE ARKANSAS NATIONAL GUARD IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER, AND AS SUCH, ALL APPLICATIONS FOR THIS POSITION WILL RECEIVE CONSIDERATION WITHOUT DISCRIMINATION FOR ANY NON-MERIT FACTORS, SUCH AS RACE, SEX, NATIONAL ORIGIN, POLITICS, MARITAL STATUS, AGE, OR MEMBERSHIP OR NON-MEMBERSHIP IN AN EMPLOYEE ORGANIZATION.”**

**3-3. POSTING OF ANNOUNCEMENTS:** Base/Installation/Unit/Activity

Commanders/Supervisors are responsible for ensuring vacancy announcements are posted on bulletin boards immediately upon receipt and ensure they remain in place during the open period. They will be posted visibly in those areas most accessible to all members of the National Guard. Supervisors and activity managers must recognize that the most effective means of securing a sufficient number of applications is to publicize vacancies to the maximum extent possible.

**3-4. APPLICATION PROCEDURES:** The application is the basic document by which the individual's qualification for the position is determined. It should, therefore, reflect the applicant's current education and employment data as well as military duty assignments, qualifications, and training. Complete and accurate data is essential to ensure fair evaluation of applications. Applicants must comply with the instructions printed on the vacancy announcement to complete application forms. Along with the application forms discussed below, supplemental forms that reflect the applicant's military qualifications should be submitted. **NOTE: The information below pertains to Excepted Service (Dual Status) positions. Applicants applying for Competitive Service (Non-Dual Status) positions will apply on USAjobs.gov.**

a. Applicants may apply using a resume or Optional Application for Federal Employment, OF 612. The application must contain **original signature** (not photocopied) or **digital**



**signature.** HRO will except faxed or scanned applications without original or digital signatures from applicants deployed OCONUS. Applications must contain a clear and concise explanation of how their experience meets the Specialized Experience and the KSAs for the position. Failure to provide this explanation may result in the applicant not receiving proper credit for work experience.

b. When the vacancy announcement allows substitution of education for experience, applicants must submit college transcripts. Transcripts are also required for career fields that have specific education requirements as stated in the announcement. Credit for post-secondary education will not be given unless transcripts are provided.

c. Applicants are solely responsible for getting their application to HRO. Applicants are required to submit a separate application for each position for which applying. For announcements posted on USAJobs, applications must be completed and submitted to USAJobs no later than 2300 hours (Central Standard Time) of the closing date on the Technician job announcement. For announcements not posted to USAJobs, application forms must be mailed and received by HRO or hand carried by the applicant to HRO **prior to noon of the first workday following the closing date specified in the EOA.** Exception: Applicants applying for announcements not posted on USAJobs who are Outside the Continental United States (OCONUS) in support of a contingency operation may fax or e-mail their application to the Recruitment and Placement section of HRO.

d. Applicants applying for Dual Status positions must meet medical requirements relating to the Technician position and the compatible MOS/AFSC. In order to verify this requirement is met, the applicant must submit their MEDPROS/AF Form 422 in the application package. If a situation arises where a physical/medical qualification requirement exists and the applicant has not been properly assessed against those requirements, a physical may be required prior to appointment. Exception: Medical conditions documented on the MEDPROS/AF Form 422, that temporarily affect an **onboard** applicant's ability to meet the medical requirements prescribed by the Technician position and MOS/AFSC, will not disqualify the applicant.

e. Supervisors must be thoroughly familiar with the instructions contained in the Merit Placement Plan and insure that each Technician under their supervision knows and understands the procedures for submitting applications. It is the responsibility of the applicant to insure full documentation of all previous education, experience and training to insure proper information is available to determine qualifications.

## SECTION 4. PROCESSING APPLICATIONS

**4-1. BASIC ELIGIBILITY:** The HRO Recruitment and Placement Specialist will review candidates' applications to determine basic eligibility of dual status positions using the National Guard Bureau Qualification Standards for Excepted Service Positions or locally developed standards as allowed by National Guard Bureau. Applicants must meet the basic qualifications established for the position including any selective placement factors. Applicants who meet the minimum qualifications will be considered basically eligible. For positions advertised at multiple grade levels, (e.g., trainee), the Recruitment and Placement Specialist will also indicate the grade level for which each applicant is qualified. Applications for Competitive Service positions will be evaluated using U.S. Office of Personnel Management Operating Manual, Qualification Standards for General Schedule Position or the Job Qualification System for Trades and Labor Occupations.

**4-2. MILITARY GRADE REQUIREMENTS:** Upon appointment, applicants must meet the military grade and compatibility requirements established for the position. Military grade inversion is not permitted. Determination of eligibility for appointment or commission as an officer will be made by the appropriate Military Personnel Officer. Applicants ineligible for appointment to the required military grade will not be considered for the position. HRO will notify those candidates of their ineligibility.

**4-3. SECURITY/SUITABILITY REQUIREMENTS:** A Technician is subject to personnel security/suitability requirements in accordance with current Technician Personnel Regulations and DoD/DA/DAF requirements. Security/suitability determinations are the responsibility of the Security Officer, not managers or supervisors. When a Technician cannot meet the security/suitability requirements of the position, removal from the position is required In Accordance With (IAW) TPR 715, Chapter 2, paragraph 2-2.

**4-4. EVALUATION:** All eligible applicants will be forwarded to the requesting official, unless there are more than ten (10) fully qualified applicants in which case the evaluation procedures in Section 5 will be used to further screen candidates prior to referral. Fully qualified applicants are those who meet the qualification requirements of the target grade.

## SECTION 5. APPLICANT EVALUATION

**5-1. GENERAL:** The Applicant Evaluation Process refers to the steps used in evaluating applicants, determining applicant's eligibility, and determining if applicant minimally meets the Specialized Experience for the position. **The Applicant Evaluation Process is applicable to all positions covered by the Merit Placement Plan (Excepted Service and Competitive Service).**

a. **Applications:** ALL applications are accepted, however, the HR Specialist (R&P) reviews submissions to determine who meets basic eligibility for consideration. When none of the applicants meet the minimum qualifications, and the announcement provides for appointment in a trainee status, candidates meeting the qualification requirements of the trainee grade will be evaluated in accordance with this paragraph.

(1) A search for qualified candidates will be made in the first area of consideration as announced. When less than two qualified candidates are found in the first area of consideration, the area may be automatically extended to the next area of consideration.

(2) When ten or fewer applications have been determined by the HRO Recruitment and Placement Specialist to meet the qualification requirements, these applications will be forwarded to the requesting official in accordance with paragraph 5-1 of the Merit Placement Plan. When more than ten candidates have been determined as meeting the minimum qualification requirements, an evaluation panel, appointed by HRO, will be convened for the purpose of rating and ranking the applications. The ten "Best Qualified" applicants will be forwarded to the Requesting Official.

b. **Evaluation panels:** Evaluation panels will consist of three members, and normally must include a representative of the HRO and two subject matter specialists of equal or higher grade than the position to be filled. Neither the Requesting Official nor the Requesting Official's supervisor will be eligible to serve as a subject matter specialist. The evaluation panel will carefully screen applications, determined by the HRO Recruitment and Placement Specialist to meet minimum qualification requirements, by evaluating those KSA factors which deal with prior experience relating to the job applied for. Prior experience will be evaluated in terms of quality in relation to the general and specialized requirements of the position. Each KSA relating to experience will be rated in the following categories:

(1) **"A" level experience:** Candidate possesses type and quality of experience that substantially exceeds the basic requirements of the position and selective placement factors that would allow the candidate to perform effectively in the position almost immediately, or with a minimum of training and/or orientation.

(2) **"B" level experience:** Candidate possesses type and quality of experience that exceeds the basic requirements of the position and selective placement factors, that would allow the candidate to perform effectively in the position within a reasonable period of time (e.g., three to six months).

(3) **"C" level experience:** Candidate satisfies the basic requirements of the position with respect to experience, including selective placement factors, but:

(a) Type and quality of experience beyond that which is basically required is minimal, and/or

(b) Additional training and/or orientation (e.g., six months or more) would be required to enable the candidate to satisfactorily perform the duties of the position.

c. **Evaluating Training/Education:** One or more KSAs will be devoted to the training or education which are prerequisites for performance of the position. Both the general level of education and/or specific training schools/courses, which the requesting official feels are necessary to allow for full performance of the job, should be addressed in the KSA(s). Each KSA relating to training/education will be rated in the following categories:

(1) **"A" level training/education:** Candidate possesses the type and quality of training/education which substantially exceeds all of the basic general and specific requirements called for by the HRO Recruitment and Placement Specialist/requesting official/subject matter specialist.

(2) **"B" level training/education:** Candidate possesses the type and quality of training/education which essentially meets both the general and specific requirement called for by the Recruitment and Placement Specialist/requesting official/subject matter specialist.

(3) **"C" level training/education:** Candidate essentially meets either the general or specific training/educational requirements, but not both; further training or education would be required to qualify the individual at the 'B' level.

(4) The point value assigned to A, B, and C levels is determined by the number of KSA factors used (see following chart). Points awarded for both experience and training/education KSAs are recorded on AG AR ARK Form 690 and transferred to AG AR ARK Form 691.

#### **POINT VALUES OF CATEGORY RATINGS**

<b>Three KSA Factors</b>	<b>Four KSA Factors</b>	<b>Five KSA Factors</b>	<b>Six KSA Factors</b>	<b>Seven KSA Factors</b>	<b>Eight KSA Factors</b>
A 33.3	A 25.0	A 20	A 16.6	A 14.2	A 12.5
B 28.3	B 21.2	B 17	B 14.1	B 12..1	B 10.6
C 23.3	C 17.5	C 14	C 11.6	C 10.0	C 8.7

Example: Using five KSA factors, a candidate's combined rating of AABBC (20, 20, 17, 17, 14) converts to 88 points.

(5) All qualified candidates' points from AG AR ARK Form 691 will be averaged to determine the cutoff between the best qualified and qualified candidates.

## SECTION 6. REFERRAL AND SELECTION PROCEDURES

**6-1. Referral:** HRO will certify to the Requesting Official from one to ten qualified candidates. Candidates will be listed in alphabetical order by last name. Upon return of the Referral and Selection Package, HRO will notify those individuals who were rated as basically qualified but not submitted for consideration, and those rated as not meeting the qualification requirements.

**6-2. Nomination:** The Requesting Official is entitled to select or non-select any candidate referred to him/her. If the Requesting Official is not available to interview or select a candidate, due to TDY, deployment, illness etc. for periods in excess of 15 days, the next line supervisor may act as the Requesting Official (written justification must be submitted with the selection package). Upon receipt of the Referral and Selection Register, the Requesting Official will:

a. **Interview Candidates:** All candidates referred to the Requesting Official must be interviewed by a selection board. Every effort will be made to conduct personal interviews. If not possible, telephone interviews should be conducted. When **one** of the candidates is interviewed, **all** candidates on the Register will be interviewed. Should the requesting official be unable to contact an applicant after several attempts, he/she may proceed with the interview and selection process. A record of the dates and times of the attempts to notify the applicant will be included on the return endorsement of the certificate to HRO.

(1) Develop a standardized set of questions based on KSAs/position requirements for use with all of the applicants, which will measure the job elements identified.

(2) Open-ended questions designed to determine each applicant's knowledge, ability and skills will be used. **Test questions will not be asked.** Situational and behavioral questions may be asked in order to determine the applicant's demonstrated experience to solve problems or to reach positive results in the performance of their duties.

(3) **Proficiency examinations/tests will not be used.** Proficiency certificates may be required if indicated on the position announcement.

b. **Interview Panel:** The purpose of convening a Interview Panel is to create an unbiased panel to fairly and thoroughly examine each applicant's credentials and suitability for the position advertised. The Interview Panel will determine the applicant who is "best qualified" and the "best fit for the position and the organization".

(1) The Interview Panel will include three members, one being the Requesting Official. In addition, a non-voting recorder (any grade) may be appointed to maintain a record of board actions.

(2) Interview Panels may include full time AGR or Technician personnel, traditional guard members, and civilian employees (no Active Duty personnel).

(3) All panel members must be of equal or senior in military rank to the highest military ranked applicant being interviewed to include being equal to or higher ranked in civilian pay grade as well.

(4) Interview Panels should include female and/or minority membership whenever possible. Boards which consider female and/or minority applicants **MUST** include such representation or document why this was not possible.

c. **Make a nomination:** The Requesting Official should have the opportunity to nominate from among at least two qualified candidates, **if possible**. If a nomination cannot be made from the list contained on the Referral and Selection Register due to legitimate job-related deficiencies of the candidates, the requesting official may return the Register to HRO with a detailed explanation of why each candidate was not satisfactory. HRO will then forward the applications of additional qualified candidates, if any, to replace the non-selected applicants, or will take action to cancel the announcement, as appropriate. Nominations must be fully justified in writing, to include a statement regarding the skills, abilities and/or knowledge possessed by the successful candidate. Technicians referred to the Requesting Official with non-Technicians will be given appropriate consideration. In those cases where the Technician is not nominated, the Requesting Official will give full written justification regarding why the Technician was not selected, and how the nominee possesses superior qualifications.

(1) The Requesting Official will complete the Referral and Selection Register. Nomination from the register must be made **within 15 workdays** after receipt of the selection package. If there is an unavoidable delay, the Requesting Official or designee will submit a request for extension in writing to HRO with justification; emails will be accepted. **Selection packages out past 30 days may be cancelled at the discretion of HRO.**

(2) **Grade inversion is prohibited.** Because of the National Guard's unique statutory military grade/rank requirement for a dual status system, an individual selected within the Technician program for a position requiring supervisory duties must be senior or equal in military rank to those he or she supervises. Unit of assignment or service component of the individual does not change this requirement.

(3) For Excepted Service positions, the nominating official must ensure that the individual nominated occupies a military position that is compatible in accordance with established NGB Military Compatibility Criteria and **is a valid vacant UMD (Air)/UMR (Army) position**. If the individual is not compatible, whether through unit/organization of assignment, or AFSC/MOS, forward documentation to HRO along with the selection package showing the individual has been placed into a compatible position and will become compatible in that position within one year. Nominees cannot be placed or appointed to the position until they meet minimum compatibility requirements.

**6-3. NOTIFICATION:** HRO will:

- a. Notify the candidate(s) selected and those not selected.

- b. Coordinate for a release/appointment date between losing and gaining supervisors.
- c. Conduct in-processing and prepare Official Personnel Folder (OPF) for new appointees.

**6-4. RELEASE OF TECHNICIAN:** After selection for promotion/placement, a Technician should be released promptly from his/her present position; release will be granted within two weeks after final selection and notification. Actual release date will be by negotiation between the gaining and losing supervisors, except where the activities are under separate commands/activities, in which case HRO will negotiate a release date. Unless approved by The Adjutant General, the release date will not normally be delayed longer than 30 days after selection.

## SECTION 7. COMPETITIVE SERVICE (NON-DUAL STATUS) POSITIONS

### **7-1. APPOINTMENT PROCESS:**

a. The Adjutant General has appointment authority for NDS competitive positions however, examining authority for NDS competitive positions is granted only to the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) or to a Designated Examining Unit (DEU) as certified by OPM.

b. Determination of available NDS resources and authorization for usage of a NDS authority is based on factors that must be approved prior to announcing and filling a position as NDS. The position description (PD) must allow a NDS appointment; in addition, funding must be available to support the position salary and announcement/qualification process as outlined below. Authorization from the Chief of Staff (Army) or the Wing Commander (Air) must be received prior to requesting a fill action. Approval by NGB-J1-TNS must be secured in order to submit a request to the examining authority. The tenure authorized for the NDS fill action is based on manpower voucher authorizations, unit manning documents and the HRO local manpower documents.

c. The DoD Program for Stability of Civilian Employment (known as the Priority Placement Program (PPP)), directs priority placement for DoD personnel who have lost their positions due to RIF, reorganization, or base closure. This DoD program is a MANDATORY requirement. This program is applicable to NDS positions in the National Guard Technician Program. The purpose of this directive is to promote stability of employment for civilian employees affected by changing manpower requirements and provides maximum opportunity for placement in other DoD positions. Consistent with this policy, a strong placement assistance program shall be maintained to minimize the adverse effects on employees.

d. NDS positions for the National Guard must be managed, announced and appointed as follows:

(1) The Requesting Official will:

- a. Submit a completed SF 52.
- b. Indicate the number of days requested to advertise (normally 5 days).
- c. If requesting a multi-graded fill, all applicable grade level information must be entered on the SF 52.
- d. Specify conditions of employment (requires top secret clearance, works rotating night shifts, etc.)

(2) The HRO will:

- a. Review all documents submitted by the Requesting Official for completeness. Verify the NDS authorization, validate funding and assure PD is applicable and current.



b. Initiate a PPP requisition for the position being submitted for fill. The PPP must be cleared IAW DoD directives during the announcement and selection process. This is done to provide affected DoD employees currently registered in the program the opportunity to be offered a position for which they are fully qualified. Policies and regulatory guidance for managing this program is subject to change at any time. Any PPP registrant determined fully qualified will be made an offer which will terminate a current vacancy announcement as the agency is mandated to accept the fully qualified PPP registrants by law.

c. Once NGB-J1-TN approval is received and the SF-39 is submitted to the DEU, all coordination required for the announcement and selection process will be managed by the HRO Staffing personnel.

d. Upon notification from the DEU that a Certificate of Eligibles has been prepared, the Staffing Specialist will procure the certificate and applicable resumes from USA Staffing and sort the applicants into the applicable Quality Category:

1) Highly-Qualified - This higher category is used for those candidates who possess the type and quality of experience that substantially exceeds the minimum qualifications of the position.

2) Well-Qualified - This next lower category is used for those candidates who meet the minimum qualifications of the position and are proficient in most, but not all, of the positions requirements.

3) Qualified – This lowest category is used for those candidates who meet the minimum qualifications of the position and are proficient in some, but not all, of the positions requirements.

e. A search for qualified candidates will be made in the first quality category. When less than three qualified candidates are found in the first quality category, the area may be automatically extended to the next quality category.

f. When ten or fewer applications have been determined by the HRO Recruitment and Placement Specialist to meet the minimum qualification requirements, these applications will be forwarded to the requesting official in accordance with paragraph 5-1 of the Merit Placement Plan. When more than ten candidates have been determined as meeting the minimum qualification requirements, an evaluation panel, appointed by HRO, will be convened for the purpose of rating and ranking the applications. The ten "Best Qualified" applicants will be forwarded to the Requesting Official.

g. Once a selection is made as outlined in Section 6 of this plan, the Staffing personnel will coordinate with the DEU for their approval and authority to make an offer of employment. Only the HRO Staffing Specialist is authorized to make an "Offer of Employment" for NDS positions. Supervisors and Requesting Officials ARE NOT AUTHORIZED to make an offer of employment for NDS positions.

h. HRO Staffing personnel will establish a start date for the selected applicant and coordinate with the gaining agency and losing agency if the applicant is a current federal government employee.

i. Staffing personnel will schedule the New Employee Orientation Briefing and advise the applicant of required documentation and information needed at the time of the briefing. All selected NDS applicants must attend the new employee orientation regardless of their current employment, tenure or type.

(3) Due to the constantly changing NDS position management directives, recruitment and placement policies, regulations and laws, the HRO Staffing section will be the primary point of contact for all merit promotion and placement actions for NDS position fill actions.

## SECTION 8. RECORD KEEPING

### **8-1. RECORDKEEPING:**

a. Complete selection records will be maintained by HRO to:

(1) Provide a clear record of the action taken.

(2) Evaluate the Merit Placement Program.

(3) Provide proof that merit placement actions are being made on a fair and equitable basis in accordance with the Merit Placement Plan.

b. Sufficient records are required to allow reconstruction of the placement action.

(1) As a minimum, the following information and forms will be retained by HRO:

(a) Copy of the Employment Opportunity Announcement (EOA).

(b) List of all applicants' names.

(c) Forms used in the evaluating and rating process.

(d) Referral and Selection Certificate signed by the requesting official.

(2) **As a minimum, the following information and forms will be retained by the Requesting Official:**

(a) Interview questions for all successful and unsuccessful applicants.

(b) All forms used in the evaluation and ranking process.

**8-2. DURATION:** Records will be maintained for a minimum of 2 years. If a grievance is pending, records will be maintained until resolution.

**8-3. PRIVACY PROTECTION:** Information relating to individual placement action or to the candidate will not be discussed with or shown to unauthorized individuals. Supervisors and Human Resource Specialists participating in merit placement actions will not disclose the details of their work to unauthorized personnel.

## SECTION 9. EMPLOYEE COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES

**9-1. ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW:** An applicant who believes that proper procedures were not followed in a particular placement or promotion action may request an administrative review in writing to the Human Resources Officer within 15 days after the date on which the applicant learns of his/her non-selection or failure to be placed in the best qualified group. The applicant must describe in sufficient detail the basis for the complaint. Upon receipt, the Human Resources Officer will review the complaint and take appropriate action. The applicant will be notified, in writing, of the Human Resources Officer's decision.

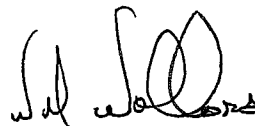
**9-2. EXCLUSIONS:** While violations of Merit Placement and Promotion procedures are proper subjects for complaints or grievances, non-selection from among a group of properly referred, best qualified applicants is not a basis for a complaint or grievance. Management has the right to determine qualifications and the appropriate source of candidates most likely to best meet mission needs.

**9-3. GRIEVANCES:** An applicant may file a grievance under applicable grievance procedures.

**9-4. DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINTS:** Allegations of discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, age, handicapping condition, or national origin made during any phase of selection process will be considered under National Guard Bureau Regulation (AR) 690-600/ (AF) 40-16143 for complaint procedures or contact an Equal Employment Office (EEO) counselor.

**9-5. TIME LIMITATIONS:** Complaints must be timely in order to preserve the rights of other applicants. A grievance must be presented within the time limitations established under applicable grievance procedures.

Users of this publication are invited to send comments and suggested improvements on DA Form 2028 (Recommended Changes to Publications and Blank Forms) to NGAR-HRO, Building 7300, Camp Robinson, North Little Rock, Arkansas 72199.



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The Adjutant General

ANITA E. DEASON  
COL, SC, AR ARNG  
Human Resources Officer

DISTRIBUTION: "Special"  
(1 ea Technician Supervisor)  
(1 ea Mil Dept Activity/Organization)