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## **OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT**

### **Privacy Act of 1974: Update and Amend System of Records**

**AGENCY:** U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM).

**ACTION:** Update and amend OPM/ GOVT-5, Recruiting, Examining, and Placement Records.

**SUMMARY:** OPM proposes to update and amend OPM/ GOVT-5, Recruiting, Examining, and Placement Records contained in its inventory of record systems subject to the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 U.S.C. 552a), as amended. This action is necessary to meet the requirements of the Privacy Act to publish in the Federal Register notice of the existence and character, as well as any new use or intended new use of records maintained by the agency. 5 U.S.C. 552a(e)(4) and (11).

**DATES:** These changes will become effective without further notice on [INSERT DATE 40 DAYS FROM THE DATE OF PUBLICATION], unless we receive comments that result in a contrary determination.

**ADDRESSES:** Send written comments to the Director, Integrated Hiring Solutions, Office of the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Office of Personnel Management, 1900 E Street, NW, Room 44690, Washington, DC 20415.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Paul Craven, Director, Integrated Hiring Solutions, [paul.craven@opm.gov](mailto:paul.craven@opm.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) system of record notices subject to the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 U.S.C. 552a), as amended, have been published in the Federal Register. The proposed changes consist of the deletion of an OPM office from the System Locations, and the designation of a replacement for the existing System

Manager. Both changes reflect the results of an OPM re-organization that eliminated the position previously named as System Manager and the office previously named in the Locations listing.

U.S. Office of Personnel Management.

Katherine Archuleta,  
Director.

## **OPM/GOVT-5**

### **System Name:**

Recruiting, Examining, and Placement Records.

### **System Location:**

Office of Personnel Management, 1900 E Street, NW., Washington, DC 20415, OPM regional and area offices; and personnel or other designated offices of Federal agencies that are authorized to make appointments and to act for the Office by delegated authority.

### **Categories of Individuals Covered by the System:**

- a. Persons who have applied to the Office or agencies for Federal employment and current and former Federal employees submitting applications for other positions in the Federal service.
- b. Applicants for Federal employment believed or found to be unsuitable for employment on medical grounds.

## **Categories of Records in the System:**

In general, all records in this system contain identifying information including name, date of birth, social security number, and home address. These records pertain to assembled and unassembled examining procedures and contain information on both competitive examinations and on certain noncompetitive actions, such as determinations of time-in-grade restriction waivers, waiver of qualification requirement determinations, and variations in regulatory requirements in individual cases.

This system includes such records as:

- a. Applications for employment that contain information on work and education, military service, convictions for offenses against the law, military service, and indications of specialized training or receipt of awards or honors. These records may also include copies of correspondence between the applicant and the Office or agency.
- b. Results of written exams and indications of how information in the application was rated. These records also contain information on the ranking of an applicant, his or her placement on a list of eligibles, what certificates applicant's names appeared on, an agency's request for Office approval of the agency's objection to an eligible's qualifications and the Office's decision in the matter, an agency's request for Office approval for the agency to pass over an eligible and the Office's decision in the matter, and an agency's decision to object/pass over an eligible when the agency has authority to make such decisions under agreement with the Office.
- c. Records regarding the Office's final decision on an agency's decision to object/pass over an eligible for suitability or medical reasons or when the objection/pass over decision applies to a compensable preference eligible with 30 percent or more disability. (Does not include a rating of ineligibility for employment because of a confirmed positive test result under Executive Order 12564.)
- d. Responses to and results of approved personality or similar tests administered by the Office or agency.
- e. Records relating to rating appeals filed with the Office or agency.
- f. Registration sheets, control cards, and related documents regarding Federal employees requesting placement assistance in view of pending or realized displacement because of reduction in force, transfer or discontinuance of function, or reorganization.
- g. Records concerning non-competitive action cases referred to the Office for decision. These files include such records as waiver of time-in-grade requirements, decisions on superior qualification appointments, temporary appointments outside a register, and employee status determinations. Authority for making decisions on many of these actions has also been delegated to agencies. The records retained by the Office on such actions and copies of such files retained

by the agency submitting the request to the Office, along with records that agencies maintain as a result of the Office's delegations of authorities, are considered part of this system of records.

h. Records retained to support Schedule A appointments of severely physically handicapped individuals, retained both by the Office and agencies acting under the Office delegated authorities, are part of this system.

i. Agency applicant supply file systems (when the agency retains applications, resumes, and other related records for hard-to-fill or unique positions, for future consideration), along with any pre-employment vouchers obtained in connection with an agency's processing of an application, are included in this system.

j. Records derived from the Office-developed or agency-developed assessment center exercises.

k. Case files related to medical suitability determinations and appeals.

l. Records related to an applicant's examination for use of illegal drugs under provisions of Executive Order 12564. Such records may be retained by the agency (e.g., evidence of confirmed positive test results) or by a contractor laboratory (e.g., the record of the testing of an applicant, whether negative, or confirmed or unconfirmed positive test result).

**Note 1:**

Only Routine Use 'p' identified for this system of records is applicable to records relating to drug testing under Executive Order 12564. Further, such records shall be disclosed only to a very limited number of officials within the agency, generally only to the agency Medical Review Official (MRO), the administrator of the agency Employee Assistance Program, and any supervisory or management official within the employee's agency having authority to take the adverse personnel action against the employee.

**Note 2:**

OPM does not intend that records created by agencies in connection with the agency's Merit Promotion Plan program be included in the term 'Applicant Supply File' as used within this notice. It is OPM's position that Merit Promotion Plan records are not a system of records within the meaning of the Privacy Act as such records are usually filed by a vacancy announcement number or some other key that is not a unique personnel identifier. Agencies may choose to consider such records as within the meaning of a system of records as used in the Privacy Act, but if they do so, they are solely responsible for implementing Privacy Act requirements, including establishment and notice of a system of records pertaining to such records.

**Note 3:**

To the extent that an agency utilizes an automated medium in connection with maintenance of records in this system, the automated versions of these records are considered covered by this system of records.

**Authority for Maintenance of the System:**

5 U.S.C. 1302, 3109, 3301, 3302, 3304, 3305, 3306, 3307, 309, 3313, 3317, 3318, 3319, 3326, 4103, 4723, 5532, and 5533, and Executive Order 9397.

**Purpose(s):**

The records are used in considering individuals who have applied for positions in the Federal service by making determinations of qualifications including medical qualifications, for positions applied for, and to rate and rank applicants applying for the same or similar positions. They are also used to refer candidates to Federal agencies for employment consideration, including appointment, transfer, reinstatement, reassignment, or promotion. Records derived from the Office-developed or agency-developed assessment center exercises may be used to determine training needs of participants. These records may also be used to locate individuals for personnel research.

**Routine Uses of Records Maintained in the System, Including Categories of Users and the Purpose of Such Uses:**

**Note 4:**

With the exception of Routine Use 'p,' none of the Other Routine Uses identified for this system of records are applicable to records relating to drug testing under Executive Order 12564. Further, such records shall be disclosed only to a very limited number of officials within that agency, generally only to the agency Medical Review Officer (MRO), the administrator of the agency's Employee Assistance Program, and the management official empowered to recommend or take adverse action affecting the individual.

- a. To refer applicants, including current and former Federal employees to Federal agencies for consideration for employment, transfer, reassignment, reinstatement, or promotion.
- b. With the permission of the applicant, to refer applicants to State and local governments, congressional offices, international organizations, and other public offices for employment consideration.
- c. To disclose pertinent information to the appropriate Federal, State, or local agency responsible for investigating, prosecuting, enforcing, or implementing a statute, rule, regulation, or order, when the disclosing agency becomes aware of an indication of a violation or potential violation of civil or criminal law or regulation.

d. To disclose information to any source from which additional information is requested (to the extent necessary to identify the individual, inform the source of the purposes of the request, and to identify the type of information requested), when necessary to obtain information relevant to an agency decision concerning hiring or retaining an employee, issuing a security clearance, conducting a security or suitability investigation of an individual, classifying positions, letting a contract, or issuing a license, grant or other benefit.

e. To disclose information to a Federal agency, in response to its request, in connection with hiring or retaining an employee, issuing a security clearance, conducting a security or suitability investigation of an individual, classifying positions, letting a contract, or issuing a license, grant, or other benefit by the requesting agency, to the extent that the information is relevant and necessary to the requesting agency's decision in the matter.

f. To disclose information to the Office of Management and Budget at any stage in the legislative coordination and clearance process in connection with private relief legislation as set forth in OMB Circular No. A-19.

g. To provide information to a congressional office from the record of an individual in response to an inquiry from that congressional office made at the request of that individual.

h. To disclose information to another Federal agency, to a court, or a party in litigation before a court or in an administrative proceeding being conducted by a Federal agency, when the Government is a party to a judicial or administrative proceeding.

i. To disclose information to the Department of Justice, or in a proceeding before a court, adjudicative body, or other administrative body before which the agency is authorized to appear, when:

1. The agency, or any component thereof; or

2. Any employee of the agency in his or her official capacity; or

3. Any employee of the agency in his or her individual capacity where the Department of Justice or the agency has agreed to represent the employee; or

4. The United States, when the agency determines that litigation is likely to affect the agency or any of its components, is a party to litigation or has an interest in such litigation, and the use of such records by the Department of Justice or the agency is deemed by the agency to be relevant and necessary to the litigation, provided, however, that in each case it has been determined that the disclosure is compatible with the purpose for which the records were collected.

j. By the National Archives and Records Administration in records management inspections and its role as Archivist.

k. By the agency maintaining the records or by the Office to locate individuals for personnel research or survey response or in producing summary descriptive statistics and analytical studies in support of the function for which the records are collected and maintained, or for related workforce studies. While published statistics and studies do not contain individual identifiers, in some instances the selection of elements of data included in the study may be structured in such a way as to make the data individually identifiable by inference.

l. To disclose information to the Merit Systems Protection Board or the Office of the Special Counsel in connection with appeals, special studies of the civil service and other merit systems, review of Office rules and rules and regulations, investigations of alleged or possible prohibited personnel practices, and such other functions; e.g., as prescribed in 5 U.S.C. chapter 12, or as may be authorized by law.

m. To disclose information to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission when requested in connection with investigations into alleged or possible discrimination practices in the Federal sector, examination of Federal affirmative employment programs, compliance by Federal agencies with the Uniform Guidelines or Employee Selection Procedures, or other functions vested in the Commission.

n. To disclose information to the Federal Labor Relations Authority or its General Counsel when requested in connection with investigations of allegations of unfair labor practices or matters before the Federal Service Impasses Panel.

o. To disclose, in response to a request for discovery or for an appearance of a witness, information that is relevant to the subject matter involved in a pending judicial or administrative proceeding.

p. To disclose the results of a drug test of a Federal employee pursuant to an order of a court of competent jurisdiction where required by the United States Government to defend against any challenge against any adverse personnel action.

q. To disclose information to Federal, State, local, and professional licensing boards, Boards of Medical Examiners, or to the Federation of State Medical Boards or a similar non-government entity which maintains records concerning the issuance, retention, or revocation of licenses, certifications, or registration necessary to practice an occupation, profession, or specialty, in order to obtain information relevant to an agency decision concerning the hiring, retention, or termination of an employee or to inform a Federal agency or licensing board or the appropriate non-government entity about the health care practice of a terminated, resigned, or retired health care employee whose professional health care activity so significantly failed to conform to generally accepted standards of professional medical practice as to raise reasonable concern for the health and safety of patients in the private sector or from another Federal agency.

r. To disclose information to contractors, grantees, or volunteers performing or working on a contract, service, grant, cooperative agreement, or job for the Federal Government.

### **Policies and Practices for Storing, Retrieving, Safeguarding, Retaining and Disposing of Records in the System:**

#### **Storage:**

Records are maintained on magnetic tapes, disk, punched cards, microfiche, cards, lists, and forms.

#### **Retrievability:**

Records are retrieved by the name, date of birth, social security number, and/or identification number assigned to the individual on whom they are maintained.

#### **Safeguards:**

Records are maintained in a secured area or automated media with access limited to authorized personnel whose duties require access.

#### **Retention and Disposal:**

Records in this system are retained for varying lengths of time, ranging from a few months to 5 years, e.g., applicant records that are part of medical determination case files or medical suitability appeal files are retained for 3 years from completion of action on the case. Most records are retained for a period of 1 to 2 years. Some records, such as individual applications, become part of the person's permanent official records when hired, while some records (e.g., non-competitive action case files), are retained for 5 years. Some records are destroyed by shredding or burning while magnetic tapes or disks are erased.

#### **System Manager(s) and Address:**

Director, Integrated Hiring Solutions, Office of the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Office of Personnel Management, 1900 E Street, NW, Room 44690, Washington, DC 20415.

#### **Notification Procedure:**

Individuals wishing to inquire whether this system of records contains information about them should contact the agency or OPM where application was made or examination was taken. Individuals must provide the following information for their records to be located and identified:

- a. Name.
- b. Date of birth.

- c. Social security number.
- d. Identification number (if known).
- e. Approximate date of record.
- f. Title of examination or announcement with which concerned.
- g. Geographic area in which consideration was requested.

**Record Access Procedure:**

Specific materials in this system have been exempted from Privacy Act provisions at 5 U.S.C. (c)(3) and (d), regarding access to records.

The section of this notice titled "Systems Exempted from Certain Provisions of the Act" indicates the kind of material exempted and the reasons for exempting them from access. Individuals wishing to request access to their non-exempt records should contact the agency or the OPM where application was made or examination was taken. Individuals must provide the following information for their records to be located and identified:

- a. Name.
- b. Date of birth.
- c. Social security number.
- d. Identification number (if known).
- e. Approximate date of record.
- f. Title of examination or announcement with which concerned.
- g. Geographic area in which consideration was requested.

Individuals requesting access must also comply with the OPM's Privacy Act regulations on verification of identity and access to records (5 CFR part 297).

**Contesting Record Procedure:**

Specific materials in this system have been exempted from Privacy Act provisions at 5 U.S.C. 552a(d), regarding amendment of records. The section of this notice titled 'Systems Exempted from Certain Provisions of the Act' indicates the kinds of material exempted and the reasons for exempting them from amendment. An individual may contact the agency or the Office where the application is filed at any time to update qualifications, education, experience, or other data maintained in the system.

Such regular administrative updating of records should not be requested under the provisions of the Privacy Act. However, individuals wishing to request amendment of other records under the provisions of the Privacy Act should contact the agency or the OPM where the application was made or the examination was taken. Individuals must provide the following information for their records to be located and identified:

- a. Name.
- b. Date of birth.
- c. Social security number.
- d. Identification number (if known).
- e. Approximate date of record.
- f. Title of examination or announcement with which concerned.
- g. Geographic area in which consideration was requested.

Individuals requesting amendment must also comply with the OPM's Privacy Act regulations on verification of identity and amendment of records (5 CFR part 297).

**Note 5:**

In responding to an inquiry or a request for access or amendment, resource specialists may contact the OPM's area office that provides examining and rating assistance for help in processing the request.

**Record Source Categories:**

Information in this system of records comes from the individual to whom it applies or is derived from information the individual supplied, reports from medical personnel on physical qualifications, results of examinations that are made known to applicants, agencies, and OPM records, and vouchers supplied by references or other sources that the applicant lists or that are developed.

**Systems Exempted from Certain Provisions of the Act:**

This system contains investigative materials that are used solely to determine the appropriateness of a request for approval of an objection to an eligible's qualifications for Federal civilian employment or vouchers received during the processing of an application. The Privacy Act, at 5 U.S.C. 552a(k)(5), permits an agency to exempt such investigative material from certain provisions of the Act, to the extent that release of the material to the individual whom the information is about would—

a. Reveal the identity of a source who furnished information to the Government under an express promise (granted on or after September 27, 1975) that the identity of the source would be held in confidence; or

b. Reveal the identity of a source who, prior to September 27, 1975, furnished information to the Government under an implied promise that the identity of the source would be held in confidence.

This system contains testing and examination materials used solely to determine individual qualifications for appointment or promotion in the Federal service. The Privacy Act, at 5 U.S.C. 552a(k)(6), permits an agency to exempt all such testing or examination material and information from certain provisions of the Act, when disclosure of the material would compromise the objectivity or fairness of the testing or examination process. OPM has claimed exemptions from the requirements of 5 U.S.C. 552a(d), which relate to access to and amendment of records.

The specific material exempted include, but are not limited to, the following

a. Answer keys.

b. Assessment center exercises.

c. Assessment center exercise reports.

d. Assessor guidance material.

e. Assessment center observation reports.

f. Assessment center summary reports.

g. Other applicant appraisal methods, such as performance tests, work samples and simulations, miniature training and evaluation exercises, structured interviews, and their associated evaluation guides and reports.

h. Item analyses and similar data that contain test keys and item response data.

i. Ratings given for validating examinations.

j. Rating schedules, including crediting plans and scoring formulas for other selection procedures.

k. Rating sheets.

l. Test booklets, including the written instructions for their preparation and automated versions of tests and related selection materials and their complete documentation.

m. Test item files.

n. Test answer sheets.

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