

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION  
Washington, DC 20405

HRM 9362.1A  
June 24, 2024

GSA ORDER

SUBJECT: GSA's Pathways Programs

1. Purpose. This Order issues and transmits General Services Administration (GSA) policy governing the use of the Pathways Programs to include the appointment and employment of individuals under the three Pathways Programs (i.e., Intern Program, Recent Graduates Program and Presidential Management Fellows (PMF) Program). It authorizes GSA to make appointments under Schedule D in the excepted service to any Pathways Program, and provides guidance establishing GSA's plan for recruitment, selection, appointment, and employment in the Pathways Programs in accordance with Title 5, United States Code (USC), Sections 3302 and 2301(b)(1), and the Code of Federal Regulations, 5 CFR Parts 213, 302, and 362. It also defines requirements for non-competitive conversion to the competitive service upon successful completion of the Pathways Programs.

2. Background. The Pathways Programs are part of the overall hiring reform through which the Federal Government seeks to streamline and improve the Federal hiring process, and specifically enable the Federal Government to compete effectively for students and recent graduates. The initial Pathways Program regulations were issued following the Executive Order (EO) 13562, Recruiting and Hiring Students and Recent Graduates, signed by President Barack Obama on December 27, 2010, creating the Pathways Programs as a solution to undo the "complexity of the rules governing admission to the career civil service" which "creates a barrier to recruiting and hiring students and recent graduates." In the decade since then, new generations have entered the workforce with different skill sets and interests, hiring and educational trends have changed, and agencies have learned more about how the program could improve to best support their talent needs. In response to the evolving workforce the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has updated the regulations to better enable the Federal government to compete with other sectors for early career talent.

3. Scope and Applicability. This order applies to all GSA Human Resources practitioners and the GSA workforce involved in the hiring and employment of all Pathways Programs' Intern, Recent Graduate, and PMF appointments under Schedule D, 5 CFR 213.3402(a), (b), and (c).

a. The Office of Inspector General (OIG) has independent personnel authority. See Section 6 of the Inspector General Act of 1978, (5 U.S.C. App.3), as amended (Inspector General is authorized "to select, appoint, and employ such officers and employees as may be necessary for carrying out the functions, powers, and duties of the Office of Inspector General") and GSA Order ADM 5450.39D CHGE 1 GSA Delegations of Authority Manual (Delegations Manual), Chapter 2, Part 1 ("the Inspector General has independent authority to formulate policies and make determinations concerning human capital issues within the [OIG]" and GSA determinations/delegations do not limit that authority). Similarly, GSA specifically recognizes that the Inspector General has independent authority to formulate policies and make determinations concerning training, employee development, and career management.

4. Cancellation. This Order cancels and supersedes HRM 9362.1, GSA's Pathways Programs, dated September 9, 2016.

5. Nature of Revisions. The provisions of this policy are updated to include OPM's changes to the regulations for the Pathways Programs. The following subjects have been adjusted:

- a. Revised definitions for key terms like "advanced degree" and "qualifying career or technical education program" clarify program entry requirements (5 CFR 362.102).
- b. Replaced OPM's memorandum of understanding (MOU) requirement with the requirement of agency Pathways policy (5 CFR 362.104).
- c. Modified public notice requirement for vacancy announcements for Pathways Interns and Recent Graduates, as mandated in 5 CFR 362.203 and 5 CFR 362.303.
- d. Increased conversion period to 180 days for graduating interns as reflected in 5 CFR 362.204.
- e. Reduced intern work experience requirements to 480 hours, with the waiver provision adjusted to allow for only 160 hours, ensuring a minimum of 320 hours are completed as outlined in 5 CFR 362.204.
- f. Increased potential initial appointment starting salary of Recent Graduates to up to GS-11 level as outlined 5 CFR 362.303(b).

- g. Updated organizational flexibility and identified criteria in determining the duration of the Recent Graduate Program, within limitations defined in 5 CFR 362.301.
- h. Adjustments for the Recent Graduate Extended Training Programs related to oversight, announcement notification and trial period.
- i. Conversion to permanent or term positions at a different federal agency is allowed under specific conditions for both Recent Graduates (5 CFR 362.305) and Presidential Management Fellows (5 CFR 362.409).
- j. Part-time work schedules are authorized for Presidential Management Fellows under certain circumstances, as per 5 CFR 362.404(e).
- k. Specific requirements are outlined for Individual Development Plans, developmental assignments, mentors and certification for Presidential Management Fellows, detailed in 5 CFR 362.405.

6. Implementation Action. Implementation under this issuance must be carried out in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, and bargaining agreements followed within GSA.

7. Signature.

/S/ \_\_\_\_\_  
 JEFFREY LAU  
 Acting, Chief Human Capital Officer

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### **Chapter 1: The GSA Pathways Programs General Provisions**

1. Introduction. The Pathways Program is used in strategic recruitment planning as a strategy for building a diverse, high-performing talent pipeline to ensure the agency's continued ability to execute its mission. This chapter addresses GSA's policy for the overarching requirements of the three programs. Refer to chapters titled "Intern

Program,” “Recent Graduates Program,” and “Presidential Management Fellows (PMF) Program” for features and requirements that are unique to each program. The following is the GSA’s Pathways Programs Policy, and provides guiding principles for use of the program. It is the policy of the General Services Administration to:

- a. Conduct strategic recruitment and hiring based on thorough workforce analysis and planning to identify and close skills gaps;
- b. Recruit and hire from diverse talent pools to ensure a diverse and inclusive workforce, reflective of the nation we serve, to carry out the agency mission and goals;
- c. Use Pathways Programs to supplement traditional hiring (*i.e.*, delegated examining and merit promotion) programs to recruit and develop a high performing talent pipeline to close agency workforce gaps and meet succession planning needs;
- d. Conduct all recruitment and hiring activities in accordance with merit system principles while avoiding prohibited personnel practices;
- e. Provide equal employment opportunity in all employment actions; and
- f. Ensure transparency in all hiring programs.

## 2. References.

- a. [Executive Order \(E.O.\) 13562, Recruiting and Hiring Students and Recent Graduates](#)
- b. [5 U.S.C. 2301, Merit System Principles](#)
- c. [5 U.S.C. 3110, Employment of Relatives; Restrictions](#)
- d. [5 CFR, Part 213, Excepted Service](#)
- e. [5 CFR Part 302, Employment in the Excepted Service](#)
- f. [5 CFR 315.713, Conversion Based on Service in a Pathways Program under Part 362](#)
- g. [5 CFR Part 362, Pathways Programs](#)
- h. [29 CFR Part 29, Labor Standards for the Registration of Apprenticeship Programs](#)
- i. [OPM Vet Guide for HR Professionals](#)
- j. [GSA Order HRM 9337.1, Category Rating and Selection Procedures](#)
- k. [GSA Order HRM 9330.2A, Selection and Placement](#)
- l. [GSA Order HRM 9714, Veteran Pass Over and Objection Requirements and Procedures](#)

## 3. Definitions.

- a. **Advanced Degree.** A master's degree, professional degree, doctorate degree, or other formal degree pursued after completing a bachelor's degree from an accredited academic institution (e.g., Master's, Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), Juris

Doctorate (JD)). See [U.S. Department of Education's Database of Accredited Postsecondary Institutions and Programs](#) to confirm accreditation.

- b. **Break in Program.** A period of time when an Intern is working but is unable to attend school; or is neither attending school nor working.
- c. **Certificate of Completion of a Registered Apprenticeship Program.** The documentation given to individuals who have successfully completed a Registered Apprenticeship Program.
- d. **Certificate Program.** Post-secondary education, in a qualifying educational institution, equivalent to at least one academic year of full-time study that is part of an accredited college-level, technical, trade, vocational, business school curriculum or a qualifying career or technical education program that awards a recognized postsecondary credential or or industry recognized credential. "Short-term" training programs (e.g., several 2-week programs completed over a period of 2 years) are not considered an academic course of study. See [U.S. Department of Education's Database of Accredited Postsecondary Institutions and Programs](#) to confirm accreditation.
- e. **Competitive Service.** Pathways participants are eligible to be non-competitively converted to a term or permanent position in the competitive service after successful completion of the Program. The competitive service covers all civilian positions in the Federal government that are not specifically excepted from the civil service laws by or pursuant to statute, by the President or by OPM under Rule VI, and are not in the Senior Executive Service (SES) or Senior Level position (SL).
- f. **E-Transcript.** Official electronic transcripts (usually converted into a PDF format) that are provided directly to the employer by a security site/link by the educational institution. Typically, the recipient has a specified time frame to view or print the transcript.
- g. **Excepted Service.** All Pathways positions are in the excepted service which covers civilian positions in the executive branch of the Federal government that are specifically excepted from the competitive service rules by law or statute, by the President via Executive Order, or by OPM (i.e., Schedules A, B, C, or D), and are not in the Senior Executive Service.
- h. **Extended Training Program.** Refers to a specialized component of the Recent Graduate Program as defined in accordance with [5 CFR 362.301](#), that offers a more structured and comprehensive developmental training experience lasting beyond the standard one-year duration. Extended training programs are designed to provide recent graduates with an enhanced opportunity for professional growth, skill development, and career advancement within GSA. To establish an extended training program, program offices must request approval

from the Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM), see chapter 3, section 5 in this order for details.

- (1) The Program Office is at the division level and is the administrative unit tasked with managing the day-to-day operations of the Recent Graduate Extended Training Program. This includes activities such as recruitment, selection, placement, training, career development, and evaluation of recent graduates within the program.
- i. **Industry Recognized Credential.** A credential or certificate that is developed and offered by, or endorsed by, a nationally or regionally recognized industry association or organization representing a sizeable portion of the industry sector, or a credential that is sought or accepted by companies within the industry sector for purposes of hiring or recruitment, which may include credentials from vendors of certain products.
- j. **Intern.** ([5 CFR 362 Subpart B](#)). A current high school, vocational, technical, undergraduate, or graduate student appointed while still in school to an initial appointment exceeding one (1) year in the Pathways Internship Program, to explore a federal career as a paid employee while continuing their education.
- k. **Intern NTE.** ([5 CFR 362 Subpart B](#)). A current high school, vocational, technical, undergraduate, or graduate student appointed while still in school to a paid temporary appointment NTE one (1) year in the Pathways Internship Program, to complete temporary projects, to perform labor-intensive tasks not requiring subject-matter expertise, or to fill traditional summer jobs.
- l. **Mentor.** A senior or journey-level GSA employee with whom each Pathways participant is paired with who can provide the employee with the guidance and support needed to develop effectively in the workplace. The mentor does not need to be in the same occupational field as the Pathways participant, but should be approachable and available as a counselor to be able to properly advise on work-related and personal workplace issues that may arise. The mentor is a role model who shares his or her expertise with less experienced individuals in order to help them understand the workplace culture and effectively build workplace relationships.
- m. **Pathways Programs Officer.** An agency employee in a position at the headquarters level (i.e., in GSA's Central Office) in a position at or higher than GS-12 or equivalent under the Federal Wage System (FWS) or other pay and classification system.
- n. **Pathways Programs Participant.** Any individual appointed under a Pathways Program.
- o. **Participant Agreement.** Written agreement between the employing agency and the Pathways participant (see appendixes A-C for program specific templates).

GSA must execute a Participant Agreement with each Pathways Program participant.

- p. **Presidential Management Fellow (PMF).** ([5 CFR 362. Subpart D](#)). An individual appointed to a two (2) year leadership development program designed to attract individuals who demonstrate academic excellence, possess management and leadership potential, and have a clear interest in and commitment to public service. Individuals must apply to OPM's PMF Program's annual job opportunity announcement within two (2) years of receiving a qualifying advanced degree. Students who expect to complete an advanced degree by August 31 of the academic year in which OPM's competition is held may also apply.
- q. **Qualifying Career or Technical Education Program.** The qualifying career or technical program must be one of the following:
  - (1) An organized educational program, administered through a Federal agency, that focuses on providing rigorous academic content and relevant technical knowledge and skills needed to prepare the individual for further education and/or a career in a current or emerging profession and provides technical skill proficiency and a recognized postsecondary credential (which may include an industry-recognized credential, a certificate, or an associate degree); or
  - (2) A Registered Apprenticeship Program; or
  - (3) Service in a Federally-administered local, state, national, or international volunteer service program or organization designed to give individuals work and or educational experiences in volunteer programs that benefit the Federal Government or local communities (e.g. Job Corps, AmeriCorps, and Peace Corps). Qualifying volunteer service must be documented with written information from the Federally sponsored program of successful completion of at least one year of volunteer service.
- r. **Qualifying Educational Institution.** ([5 CFR 362.102](#)). The qualifying educational institution must be one of the following:
  - (1) A public high school whose curriculum has been approved by a State or local governing body, a private school that provides secondary education as determined under State law, or a homeschool that is allowed to operate in a State.
  - (2) Any of the following educational institutions or curricula that have been accredited by an accrediting body recognized by the Secretary of the U. S. Department of Education:
    - (a) Technical or vocational school;
    - (b) 2-year or 4-year college or university;

- (c) Graduate or professional school (e.g., law school, medical school);  
or
- (d) A post-secondary home-school curriculum.
- s. **Recent Graduate.** ([5 CFR 362, Subpart C](#)). An individual who has obtained a qualifying associate's, bachelor's, master's, professional, doctorate, vocational, or technical degree or certificate from a qualifying educational institution or completed a qualifying career or technical education program within the previous two (2) years of application (up to six (6) years for qualifying veterans) to obtain entry-level developmental experience designed to lead to a career in the Federal government.
- t. **Recognized Postsecondary Credential.** The documentation (e.g., official record) of an industry-recognized credential or certification, a certificate of completion of a Registered Apprenticeship Program, a license recognized by the State involved or Federal Government, or an associate's or baccalaureate degree.
- u. **Registered Apprenticeship Program.** A program that meets the requirements in [29 CFR part 29](#). Approval of registration is evidenced by a Certificate of Registration or other written documentation as provided by the respective career or technical education establishment.
- v. **Schedule D.** The excepted service appointing authority established by [Presidential Executive Order 13562](#) to appoint individuals to Pathways Programs positions.
- w. **Student.** An individual who is:
  - (1) Accepted for enrollment or enrolled and seeking a degree (diploma, certificate, etc.) in a qualifying educational institution, on a full or half-time basis (as defined by the institution in which the student is enrolled), including awardees of the Harry S. Truman Foundation Scholarship Program under Public Law 93-842. Students need not be in actual physical attendance, so long as all other requirements are met. An individual who needs to complete less than the equivalent of half an academic/vocational or technical course-load immediately prior to graduating is still considered a student for purposes of this program; or
  - (2) Enrolled or accepted for enrollment in a qualifying career or technical education program that awards a recognized postsecondary credential.
- x. **Trainer.** An employee who provides on-the-job training to an intern, recent graduate, or Presidential Management Fellow when this role is filled by an individual other than the immediate supervisor.

#### 4. Roles and Responsibilities.

- a. The Human Capital Policy and Programs Division is responsible for the overall administration and management of GSA's Pathways Programs.
- b. The GSA Pathways Programs Officer administers GSA's Pathways Programs, including:
  - (1) Develop policy governing the implementation, administration, and use of the Pathways Programs at GSA;
  - (2) Provide program direction to GSA Servicing Human Resources offices;
  - (3) Provide program oversight and ensure that all managers and supervisors are aware of the program's requirements and carry out their responsibilities related to the program and participants within their organizations;
  - (4) Monitor and assess Pathways Programs operations, by conducting periodic program reviews and report results to the OPM, as required.
  - (5) Coordinate and provide guidance on recruitment and on-boarding processes for Pathways Programs participants to ensure consistent practices are followed;
  - (6) Coordinate Pathways Programs plans with stakeholders and other hiring plans (e.g., Merit Promotion, Employment of People with Disabilities);
  - (7) Review Recent Graduate Extended Training Program requests to ensure adherence to established criteria and guiding regulations;
  - (8) Serve as liaison with OPM, for example, by providing updates to OPM on the implementation of Pathways Programs, obtaining clarification on program issues as necessary, and by sharing best practices;
  - (9) Report GSA's Pathways Policy to OPM as required;
  - (10) Review and approve or disapprove requests for a temporary part-time work schedule for a presidential management fellow;
  - (11) Review and approve or disapprove extension requests of up to 120 days for recent graduates and PMFs; and
  - (12) Serve as the PMF coordinator for GSA and will:
    - (a) Provide oversight of all PMF related activities;
    - (b) Provide program direction to GSA servicing Human Resources offices;
    - (c) Coordinate the onboarding, orientation, programmatic support and certification oversight for Presidential Management Fellows; and
    - (d) Serves as a liaison with OPM by providing updates on programmatic issues, sharing agency best practices, and reporting.
- c. The Chief Human Capital Officer will:
  - (1) Review and approve or disapprove training agreement requests for the Recent Graduate Extended Training Programs.

- (2) Serve as the Executive Resources Board (ERB) for GSA's PMF program. Certifying in writing that the PMF met all requirements of the Program for conversion to a position in the competitive service, including performance and developmental expectations set forth in the individual's performance plan and IDP.
- d. The Human Resources Service Center (HRSC) Directors will:
  - (1) Review and approve or disapprove requests to waive up to 160 hours of the 480 required hours of intern work experience;
  - (2) Review and approve or disapprove requests for a break in the Intern Program;
  - (3) Review and approve or disapprove requests to appoint non-citizen candidates to the Pathways Programs; and
  - (4) Review Recent Graduate Extended Training Program requests for merit and feasibility.
- e. The Servicing Human Resources Offices (HROs) will:
  - (1) Ensure HRO staff members understand the requirements, intent, and operations of the program, and provide accurate, appropriate guidance and assistance to management and employees;
  - (2) Perform recruitment activities and process personnel actions to appoint individuals hired;
  - (3) Assist supervisors, as necessary, in developing performance plans and ensure adherence to GSA's Performance Management System relative to evaluation of Pathways participants' performance on the job;
  - (4) Assist supervisors and Pathways participants in completion of the required Pathways Participant Agreement upon appointment to a Pathways Program; and
  - (5) Process, document, and track breaks in the Intern Program.
- f. The GSA Heads of Service and Staff Offices (HSSOs) will:
  - (1) Determine positions to be filled through Pathways Programs based on workforce analysis and planning;
  - (2) Establish internal procedures as needed to ensure the successful appointment, training, and developmental experience of Pathways participants; and
  - (3) Review Recent Graduate Extended Training Program requests to ensure the extended training program is supportable and meets organizational needs.
- g. The Hiring Managers and Supervisors will:
  - (1) Prepare an Individual Development Plan (IDP) for each Pathways participant serving an appointment expected to last 90 days or more that

contains an overall plan of development, training activities, and competencies the Pathways participant must attain by the end of the program. Supervisors will work with participants to establish the IDP within the first 45 days of appointment for interns and recent graduates, and within 90 days of appointment for PMFs. IDPs must be consistent with critical elements and performance standards of the position;

- (2) Issue critical elements and performance standards as required by GSA's Performance Management System;
  - (3) Assist with identifying and assigning mentors to Pathways recent graduates and PMF programs participants;
  - (4) Plan assignments according to the requirements of the IDP to enhance development of the participant, including scheduling training and rescheduling or substituting developmental activities when necessary;
  - (5) Ensure that all program participants receive training, provide the resources necessary to fulfill the requirements of the IDP, and discuss each training and developmental activity with the participant upon completion;
  - (6) Evaluate performance and ensure that the participant has a clear understanding of the evaluation. Provide counseling and guidance when performance is determined to be less than satisfactory in accordance with GSA's Performance Management System;
  - (7) Make determinations and initiate action to convert or not convert a program participant upon completion of the specific Pathways Program requirements; and
  - (8) Ensure that a participant agreement is completed and updated as necessary for each Pathways Programs participant and provide a copy of signed agreement to each party to the agreement and to the servicing HR office.
- h. The Pathways Programs Participants will:
- (1) Adhere to all provisions of the Participant Agreement between the participant and employing organization;
  - (2) Participate with the supervisor in developing the IDP and comply with all requirements established in the IDP;
  - (3) Maximize developmental experiences and training opportunities to meet objectives established for the position in the IDP;
  - (4) Carry out all assigned tasks and other requirements of the program; and
  - (5) Make genuine efforts to remedy any deficiencies noted by the supervisor.
- i. The Mentor will meet regularly with the Pathways Programs participant. Serving as a trusted advisor and providing a different focus or perspective from the

technical emphasis on the job and oversight that the supervisor and/or trainer provide. The frequency of meetings is determined by mutual agreement, but at least monthly.

5. Workforce Planning. GSA organizations will ensure that workforce plans identify sufficient numbers of positions to allow for the possibility of conversion of Pathways Programs participants who successfully complete the program.
6. Adherence to Merit Principles. GSA supervisors and staff must provide equal employment opportunity in all actions taken under the Pathways Programs. All actions under the Pathways Programs will be based on merit and made without regard to race, ethnicity, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy and gender identity), national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, genetic information, or any other non-merit-based factors.
  - a. **Public Notice Requirement**. GSA will meet the public notice requirement by providing information to OPM about GSA's Pathways Intern and Recent Graduates Program's job opportunities, including position title, series and grade, locations, and where to find information about specific employment opportunities. GSA may use the following options for meeting the public notice requirement:
    - (1) Posting a searchable announcement on [www.USAJOBS.gov](http://www.USAJOBS.gov); or
    - (2) Posting job information with a link to a USAJOBS custom job announcement on the "Careers" page on GSA's external website. This custom posting must provide applicants with information about how to apply or seek additional information about the position(s) being filled, while also providing information regarding that job announcement to OPM.
  - b. **Job Opportunity Announcements (JOAs)**. All JOAs for employment in the Pathways Intern and Recent Graduates Programs at GSA will be open to all eligible U.S. citizens. In addition to information that is required in all job opportunity announcements (e.g., pertaining to equal employment opportunity and reasonable accommodation), JOAs will include the following information:
    - (a) Announcement number;
    - (b) position title, series, and grade;
    - (c) salary;
    - (d) geographic location;
    - (e) description of duties;
    - (f) qualification requirements;
    - (g) Pathways Program under which the position is being filled;
    - (h) not-to-exceed date of the appointment, if the position is an Intern NTE;
    - (i) duration of training program for recent graduates (i.e.,

- 1-year or 2-year, see chapter 3, section 5 for extended training program information);
  - (j) full-performance level of the career-ladder position to which the Pathways Programs participant may be converted in the competitive service;
  - (k) grade level(s) to which a participant may be promoted while in the Pathways Programs;
  - (l) potential for promotion(s) and conversion to the competitive service to a position's full performance level if all qualifications and eligibility requirements are met;
  - (m) potential for conversion to an intern position, if advertised as an Intern NTE position;
  - (n) how to apply, including additional required documents (e.g., transcripts, DD214);
  - (o) agency point-of-contact and how to request additional information; and,
  - (p) any other pertinent information.
- c. Announcements should be posted for a period of at least 5 work days. Notice periods of less than 5 work days must be documented in the case file to show the examining office's rationale for using a shorter notice period.
- d. The open period may be defined by the number of applications received. If this method is used, the job opportunity announcement will clearly state the number of applications that will be accepted. The recommended limit of applications accepted should be no fewer than 150 applications. If a limit is set for fewer than 150 applications, it must be clearly justified and documented in the case file. All applications received by 11:59 PM (Eastern Standard Time) on the day the specified number is reached will be considered.
- e. JOA templates have been developed for use in posting Pathways Programs employment opportunities. Templates are maintained in the GSAJOBS system for the use of HR specialists in announcing employment opportunities, and are updated as required by the GSAJOBS team to reflect changing requirements.
- f. **Accepting Applications.**
- (1) All individuals interested in specific employment opportunities must submit a resume and all required supporting documents (e.g., transcript, DD214) through the automated system no later than 11:59 PM (Eastern Standard Time) on the closing date of the announcement.
  - (2) Individuals attending recruiting events will be directed to the "[Careers](#)" page on GSA's website and/or to OPM's USAJOBS website for

information on how to apply for consideration for specific opportunities, including those highlighted at the recruiting event.

- (3) Interested individuals who cannot attend specific recruitment events will also be directed to the "[Careers](#)" page on GSA's website and/or to OPM's USAJOBS for information to apply for vacancies highlighted through that event.
- (4) To receive consideration for a specific job opportunity, all applications must be submitted to that announcement number, using the automated system. Applicants must submit a resume and all other required documentation, as identified in the job opportunity announcement, to substantiate their eligibility for the program under which they are applying.
- (5) Targeted recruitment may be conducted at selected educational institutions. GSA representatives attending job fairs or other recruitment events may not accept resumes from individuals, but must explain application procedures and direct interested individuals to the how-to-apply instructions online. To maximize employment opportunities for students and recent graduates, recruitment for potential candidates should take place at venues that are open to all students who may want to attend the recruitment event, including potential applicants from other colleges and universities. Prior to conducting targeted recruitment, public notice in the form of a job opportunity announcement, advertisement (flyer), or notice of a recruitment event/job, providing details on the location of the recruitment event and specific Pathways Programs employment opportunities will be provided to USAJOBS.

**g. *Qualifications and Eligibility.***

- (1) Applicants must meet all eligibility and qualification requirements for the position being filled, including:
  - (a) U. S. Citizenship;
  - (b) general and/or specialized experience as defined by OPM, or by the agency for positions not covered in OPM's qualification standards;
  - (c) any positive education requirements and selective placement factors identified for the position;
  - (d) any special conditions of employment associated with the position;  
and
  - (e) achieve a passing score on any required tests or assessments (e.g., ACWA).
- (2) Job opportunity announcements must describe both eligibility for the specific Pathways Program and qualifications for the position being filled.

- (3) Applicants' eligibility and qualifications must be determined during the assessment process.
  - (4) Applicants must submit appropriate documentation to substantiate eligibility and qualifications for appointment.
  - (5) Each servicing HR office is responsible for ensuring that priority consideration is received for any candidates eligible as defined in [5 CFR 302.103](#).
- h. **Citizenship.** Typically, applications for Pathways Programs positions will only be accepted from U.S. citizens. However, non-U.S. citizens may be considered when recruitment efforts for difficult to fill positions or positions with highly specialized degree requirements do not yield sufficient pools of quality candidates who are U.S. citizens, provided the individual is lawfully admitted to the United States as a permanent resident or is otherwise authorized to be employed. Approved justifications and documentation supporting recruitment efforts and results must be maintained in the case file. Pathways Program participants must be U.S. citizens to be eligible for non-competitive conversion to a position in the competitive service.
- i. **Assessing Candidates.**
- (1) HR specialists will use the OPM's qualification standards to evaluate candidates' minimum qualifications for the position and grade level being filled. To be eligible for appointment under any Pathways Program, candidates must meet all qualification requirements specified in OPM's qualification standards, including any positive education requirements, selective placement factors, and any other designated special qualification requirements and conditions of employment (e.g., medical standards) as appropriate to the specific position.
  - (2) The [Luevano Consent Decree](#) had a special exemption for the former "co-op" program (SCEP) and that exemption has been extended to the Pathways Intern Program. Therefore, the ACWA assessment is not required for applicants to the Intern Program and is not required for conversion to a position in the competitive service from an intern position. Staffing specialists should refer to OPM's qualification standards for any test requirements. For 2-grade interval Luevano-covered positions being filled at entry level GS-05 or GS-07 with promotion potential of GS-09 or higher, applicants to recent graduates positions must take and pass (with a score of 70 or better) the Administrative Career with America (ACWA) assessment or a valid, approved alternative to ACWA. Servicing Human Resources Offices will follow established procedures to provide access to

the link to candidates to take the assessment online or schedule a proctored written test session.

- (3) The multiple hurdle assessment process may be utilized when assessing candidates (e.g., [SME-QA](#)). There are a variety of tools available to help determine the best assessments. Refer to the hiring process options in [Chapter 5, Section B of the Delegated Examining Operations Handbook](#) for hiring scenarios using multiple assessment and multiple hurdle approaches which includes the application of veterans preference, when appropriate.
- (4) Reconsideration requests are permissible if an applicant does not believe they were rated properly, and wishes to have a rating reconsidered. A written request for reconsideration must be filed with the HR office that processed the recruitment action. The request must specify why the applicant believes the original decision was improper, what factors were not considered, and any other pertinent information that will support the request and enable the HR office reviewer to re-evaluate the original decision. Any new or additional information or experience or education gained after the closing date of the job opportunity announcement associated with the reconsideration request cannot be considered.
- (5) A qualified HR staff member other than the one who made the original rating decision will perform the review to evaluate the original decision. Upon completion of this re-evaluation, an explanation that supports the reconsideration decision will be provided to the applicant. This is considered a first level review and appeal. Upon request, the applicant may submit a second level appeal to the HR Director. The second-level appeal review and decision is considered final, and there is no further appeal to OPM.

- j. ***Application of Veterans' Preference.*** The procedures outlined in [5 CFR Part 302](#) must be followed when filling positions under any Pathways Program. Selections will be made in accordance with the requirements of [5 CFR 302.401](#) and veterans' preference laws.

## 7. Referral and Selection of Candidates.

- a. Referral and selection of interns and recent graduates will be made in accordance with procedures outlined in [5 CFR 302.304](#) and [5 CFR 302.401](#). Candidates may be ranked using category rating, in accordance with [GSA Order HRM 9337.1, Category Rating and Selection Procedures](#), or an unranked method, in which only basic eligibility is determined. The reason(s) for using the rating method chosen must be documented in the recruitment case file.

- b. When category rating is used, the definitions of the quality categories and the quality ranking factors used must be recorded and retained in the recruitment case file.
- c. When using category rating, each qualified candidate should be evaluated by the HR specialist based on his or her qualifications for the position and be assigned to one of the quality categories. Veterans' preference must be applied, and preference eligibles should be listed at the top of their assigned categories, with their veterans' preference designation code, as reflected in this directive:
  - (1) 10-point preference eligibles with a compensable service-connected disability of 10% or more (CP and CPS). Preference eligibles with a compensable service-connected disability of 10% or more who meet the minimum qualifications for the position are placed at the top of the highest category, with the exception of GS-09 level or equivalent or higher positions that are scientific or professional
  - (2) All other 10-point preference eligibles (XP)
  - (3) All 5-point preference eligibles (TP)
  - (4) All 0-point preference eligible (SSP)
  - (5) Non-preference eligibles
- d. When the unranked method is used by selecting officials, applicants who have received eligible ratings for positions that are not scientific/professional at GS-09 and above will be considered by preference category. Preference eligibles having a compensable service-connected disability of 10 percent or more are considered first, followed by other 10-point preference eligibles, then by 5-point preference eligibles, followed next by 0-point preference eligibles, and, finally, by non-preference eligibles. Within each category, applicants from the reemployment list will be placed ahead of applicants from the regular employment list.
- e. When using the "unranked" method, selecting officials should provide the reason(s) for their selections to provide complete documentation for the recruitment case file. Documentation should support the hiring decision with specific details identifying why the candidate was selected. For example, describe the qualities that differentiated the candidate from other candidates.
- f. When considering candidates from an unranked list, selection must be made from the highest available preference category, as long as three candidates remain in that group. When fewer than three candidates remain in the highest category, consideration may be expanded to include the next category. If consideration is extended to non-preference eligibles, a non-preference eligible may not be selected ahead of a preference eligible unless a passover request is sustained.

- g. When unranked order is used for professional and scientific positions at GS-09 and above, all preference eligible candidates will be considered together regardless of the type of preference, followed by all other priority reemployment candidates.
  - h. [5 CFR 302.401\(a\)](#) outlines specific procedures for selection of candidates who have been referred using the unranked method.
- 8. Employment of Relatives. Pathways Program participants may work in the same agency with a relative when there is no direct reporting relationship and the relative is not in a position to influence or control the participant's appointment, employment, promotion, advancement or conversion within the agency.
- 9. Onboarding. GSA has an established process that has been designed to provide a consistent on-boarding experience for all new employees, regardless of the hiring authority under which they are appointed. Guidance and information for HR specialists and hiring managers pertaining to "on-boarding" of new employees can be found on the *InSite* page under "[Welcome to GSA!](#)".
- 10. Individual Participation Agreement.
  - a. GSA must enter into a written agreement with each Pathways Programs participant it employs. The participation agreements define the roles and responsibilities of each party. GSA requires the educational institution to be a party to any agreement between GSA and a Pathways Program participant in the Intern Program when the educational institution requires that students complete a work-study program that is sponsored by the educational institution to achieve successful completion of academic requirements. Agreements must include and address the following:
    - (1) A general description of the duties to be performed;
    - (2) work schedules;
    - (3) length of appointment and termination date;
    - (4) mentorship opportunities;
    - (5) training plan requirements as applicable;
    - (6) procedures and requirements for evaluating Pathways Programs participants, including frequency of evaluations;
    - (7) requirements for continuing and successful completion of the program;
    - (8) minimum eligibility requirements for non-competitive conversion to term or permanent appointment in the competitive service under the specific Pathways Program in which employed; and
    - (9) any other requirements GSA deems appropriate.

- b. When a Pathways Programs participant moves between agencies, or to another organization within the initial hiring agency, a new agreement must be created by the supervisor and signed by all parties. For example, if a Pathways participant applies and is selected for a different Pathways position within GSA, a new Pathways Participation Agreement would be necessary to document any changes in duties, location, work schedule, expectations or other significant aspects of the Pathways participant's role within the new position. Additionally, if a Pathways participant is reassigned and there are any changes in supervisor, duties, location, work schedule, expectations or other significant aspects of the Pathways participant's role a new agreement must be signed. This ensures clarity in program expectations for both the participant and the hosting office.
  - c. Templates for each Pathways Program Participant Agreement can be found in [Appendix A. Intern Program Participant Agreement](#), [Appendix B. Recent Graduate Program Participant Agreement](#), and [Appendix C. Presidential Management Fellow Program Participant Agreement](#).
11. Performance Evaluation. Each Pathways Program participant (i.e., intern, recent graduate and PMF) will be placed on a performance plan and receive performance feedback and an annual performance evaluation in accordance with GSA's performance management system. However, interns NTE appointed for less than 120 days will receive performance feedback documented on the [Performance Planning Template in Appendix D](#).
12. Telework. The provisions outlined in the [GSA Order HRM 6040.1C GSA Telework and Remote Work Policy](#), should be followed. When considering telework arrangements for Pathways Program participants, supervisors should be cognizant about training, mentoring, career-development, and job evaluation opportunities for students, recent graduates and Presidential Management Fellows that are primarily available at the work site and may require the participant's physical presence at the work site.
13. Rotational Assignments (Details). The provisions of the [GSA Order HRM 9334.2A Detail of Employees](#), should be followed. When considering rotational assignments and details for Pathways Program participants, the opportunity must be aligned with the objectives outlined in the Individual Development Plan (IDP) and the Pathways Participation Agreement.
14. Appointment Extensions.
- a. An extension to the appointment of a Pathways Program participant in either the Recent Graduates Program or PMF Program may be requested for up to 120 days.

- b. The immediate supervisor must submit the request for extension in writing to the Pathways Program Officer through the servicing Human Resources Office after obtaining the concurrence of officials within the employing organization as determined by the organization.
- c. The supervisor must submit the request to the HR office at least 90 days prior to the end date of the initial appointment.
- d. The written request must explain the reasons the extension is deemed necessary. For example, an extension may be granted if the participant has been absent on extended leave due to a medical emergency or paid parental leave, but a decision will be made based on the merits of each situation.
- e. In general, extensions are primarily granted to allow a Pathways Program participant to complete developmental requirements that will make him or her eligible for the target position in the IDP.
- f. The Pathways Program Officer will grant extensions for reasons such as to appraise performance or conduct, to finish school, to work on a clerkship, or to take advantage of a scholarship.

15. Termination of Appointment.

- a. The appointment of a Pathways Program participant may be terminated at any time for any reason including misconduct, poor performance, suitability, lack of funds or change in priorities (e.g., a program or function is eliminated).
- b. The appointment of a Pathways Program participant who is not converted to a term, career-conditional, or career appointment in the competitive service automatically expires at the end of the program period or agency-approved extension, if applicable. Therefore, the appointment of any interns, recent graduates and PMFs who are not converted at the end of the program period must be terminated.
- c. A recent graduate who held a career-conditional or career appointment with GSA immediately before entering the Program, and who fails to complete the Program for reasons that are not related to misconduct, poor performance, or suitability, may be placed in a permanent competitive service position for which the individual meets all eligibility and qualification requirements, if one is available.
- d. Prior to terminating a Pathways Program participant, the participant's employment history must be evaluated by a Senior Employee Relations Specialist from the servicing Human Resources Office to ensure any procedural rights due to the participant are granted.

16. Documenting the Appointment. Appointments made under the Pathways Programs are under Schedule D, and will be documented with the appropriate codes and remarks

from OPM's "Guide to Processing Personnel Actions." Refer to [OPM's Guide to Processing Personnel Actions, Chapter 11, Table 11-A, Rules 37 – 48](#), for codes and remarks to be used when documenting the appointment on the SF 50.

#### 17. Accountability and Recordkeeping.

- a. Pathways Program case files and activities are subject to audit and review by GSA's Independent Audit Program or the Office of Personnel Management. Annual accountability reviews will be conducted to ensure compliance with GSA and OPM policy and guidance, all applicable federal laws and regulations and to ensure that Pathways hiring is in alignment with agency strategic plans and workforce goals. These reviews will be comprehensive and will include, but are not limited to, the examination of case file documentation.
- b. Record retention requirements for appointments in the Pathways Program are the same as those defined in [OPM's DEOH, Appendix C](#). The records and documentation for Pathways employment will be maintained for a minimum of 3 years. If the action becomes the subject of litigation or a discrimination complaint, there may be a requirement to retain such records for a longer period of time. In such cases, a "litigation hold" on destruction of the documents may be initiated (e.g., by the Office of General Counsel) until the legal matter is settled, or notification provided by the EEO Office to retain the case file until the issue is resolved. At a minimum, the case file must include the following records (in paper or electronic form):
  - (1) SF-52 or Personnel Action Request (PAR);
  - (2) job analysis (signed/dated by HR and SME/HM; if not signed, email approval);
  - (3) weighting calculator/spreadsheet;
  - (4) position description(s);
  - (5) applicable qualification standard;
  - (6) job opportunity announcement (USAJOBS);
  - (7) Certificate of referral;
  - (8) signed Pathways Participant Agreement from selectee
  - (9) official transcripts (if applicable);
  - (10) subject matter expert (SME) certification forms, if any;
  - (11) evaluation records and/or basic eligibility determinations;
  - (12) GSA Recruitment Conversation Checklist;
  - (13) declinations of job offers;
  - (14) reconsideration requests/responses;
  - (15) objection/passover requests;

- (16) correspondence with the hiring manager (e.g. JOA cancellation, additional selections, etc.); and
- (17) hiring incentives or superior qualifications appointment (SQA) approvals.

## **Chapter 2: Intern Program**

1. Intern Program. In addition to the general provisions outlined in Chapter 1, the following conditions pertain to the Intern Program. The two components of the Intern Program provide for two distinct needs of students and the agency.
  - a. The first component fills a need for flexible, temporary employment to enable students to earn a salary while continuing their studies, and for the agency to hire employees to perform labor intensive tasks not requiring subject-matter expertise, complete temporary projects, or to fill traditional summer jobs; this component is filled by the employment of interns not-to-exceed (NTE). The intent is to provide maximum flexibility and opportunity to agencies and students that will meet varying needs on a short-term basis.

- b. The second component of the Intern Program addresses a need for career-related employment which enriches students' academic experience and offers them valuable work experience in their career field, and for the agency to develop students on the job, in preparation for a career in the Federal service. These positions are filled by interns.
- 2. Recruitment of Interns NTE. This paragraph pertains to recruitment for an intern NTE, which is a temporary appointment for student summer or other short term employment opportunities. Non-student summer employment opportunities will be filled using the appropriate appointing authority and work schedule. The solicitation for Pathways Student Summer Interns is typically done during the winter months.
  - a. The Office of HR Services will solicit interest from the services and staff offices to determine the number and types of positions to be filled.
  - b. The announcements will be posted on USAJOBS to solicit applications for employment during the upcoming summer months to fill projected vacancies.
  - c. The servicing Human Resources Office staff and/or the National Recruitment Center (NRC) will issue referral lists as Personnel Action Requests (PARs) are submitted.
  - d. Servicing Human Resources Offices may also announce and fill temporary Pathways intern employment opportunities at other times during the year as they occur.
- 3. Classification of Positions.
  - a. Positions that are classified to the General Schedule (GS) must be classified as "student trainee," in the GS-xx99 series of the appropriate occupational series for use in the Intern Program.
  - b. Positions that are classified to the Federal Wage System (FWS) must be classified as "student trainee," in the xx01 series of the appropriate occupational group.
- 4. Qualifications and Eligibility.
  - a. Individuals must meet the qualifications and eligibility requirements for initial appointment and for continued employment throughout the duration of the intern appointment.
  - b. Prior to initial appointment, interns must provide documentation of student status. Such documentation may be in the form of an official copy of school transcript (e.g., transcript issued directly to the employer (1) in a sealed envelope that bears the embossed or raised college seal, date and the Registrar's signature, or

- (2) as an e-Transcript), official documentation of registration, tuition bill, or, if a new student, a copy of the acceptance letter from the college or university.
- c. Interns must provide documentation of enrollment in a qualifying educational program at the beginning of each enrollment period. They must also provide a copy of an up-to-date unofficial transcript at the end of each academic year, unless requested more frequently by the supervisor or servicing Human Resources Office, for verification of enrollment and academic standing as proof of continuing eligibility for participation in the Intern Program. As necessitated by individual circumstances, students may be required to submit an official transcript. Students must continue to show adequate progress toward completing the educational program. Adequate progress may be affected by various factors, such as the academic program and the student's course load, so it is determined on an individual basis, and is not specifically defined. The appointment of an intern may be terminated for failure to maintain adequate progress in the educational program and remain in good academic standing as defined by the school.

#### 5. Appointment.

- a. An intern serving under an appointment for an initial period expected to last more than one year is placed in Tenure Group II in the excepted service for purposes of [5 CFR 351.205](#) and is afforded the same retention rights as other excepted service employees. An intern hired on an appointment not to exceed one year is placed in Tenure Group 0. An intern serving under a temporary appointment that is extended for an additional year is in excepted service Tenure Group III provided he or she has completed at least one year of current continuous service.
- b. Interns are appointed under Schedule D, as provided for in [5 CFR 362.203\(d\)](#), using the appointing authority provided in [5 CFR 213.3402\(a\)](#). [See OPM's Guide to Processing Personnel Actions, Chapter 11, Table 11-A, Rules 37 – 40](#), for Nature of Action and Legal Authority codes and any required remarks to be documented on accession actions.
- c. Appointment may be on a temporary basis, not to exceed one year, or for an initial period that is expected to last more than one (1) year. Temporary appointments may be appropriate for employment during the traditional summer months. The time limitations found in [5 CFR 213.104](#) and [5 CFR 316.401](#) do not apply to individuals hired under the Pathways Intern Program.
- d. In rare instances, a student serving as intern NTE may be noncompetitively converted to a term, career or career-conditional appointment, provided the job opportunity announcement from which they were selected includes a provision

for conversion in accordance with [5 CFR 213.3402\(a\)](#), and all other requirements for conversion are met. However, since intern NTE appointments are intended to meet short term needs not requiring subject matter expertise, conversion should rarely occur.

- e. The temporary appointment of an intern may be converted to an intern appointment without a not-to-exceed date by re-appointing the intern in accordance with [5 CFR 213.3402\(a\)](#), provided the job opportunity announcement from which they were selected includes a provision for conversion to an intern position without a not-to-exceed date.

6. Individual Development Plan (IDP). Interns on appointments without a not-to-exceed date and those with a not-to-exceed date who are on an appointment of 90 days or more in length, must be placed on an Individual Development Plan that outlines the formal and on-the-job training designed to help the intern acquire the competencies of the target position to which the intern will be assigned upon completion of the Intern Program, or the current position for interns NTE. The IDP must be developed by the supervisor, in conjunction with the intern, within the first 45 days of the appointment. Developmental activities to be included in the IDP are:

- a. The training plan will be included, highlighting areas such as on-the-job training, daily instruction and guidance designed to prepare the employee to assume progressively more difficult duties, formal classes and assisting with projects. The training must constitute at least 50 percent of the developmental activities;
- b. The IDP will identify appropriate sources and content of developmental activities and formal interactive training and expected timeframes for completion of developmental activities and training; and
- c. IDPs will be reviewed and revised as necessary to ensure the training activities originally identified are meeting developmental goals.

7. Nature of Assignments.

- a. The duties of the position to which the intern is appointed must be related to either the intern's academic program or career goals, as stated in the intern's initial job application and/or educational transcripts, (except as noted in paragraph d. below).
- b. When work experience is required for successful completion of a course of study, the position and duties should be directly related to the student's academic and career goals. For some post-secondary students, work related to academic and career goals is often a necessary part of meeting educational objectives. Absent work experience, students may not meet degree requirements or specific qualification requirements for conversion of appointment, if appropriate, upon

completion of work-study program. Human resources staff must be aware of the nature of the educational requirements and coordinate with educational institutions to ensure both Pathways and educational program requirements are met. When work experience is required by the educational institution for the student to meet course, degree, or certification requirements, a three-way agreement that defines the roles and responsibilities of each party must be established and signed by the educational institution, employing agency, and student.

- c. Similarly, when filling positions that require the completion of specific education, work assignments must be related to the degree/field of study, and when the target position to which the student will be assigned upon completion of the Intern Program has a positive education requirement, HR specialists must verify that students are taking appropriate courses to ensure the students meet the qualification requirements for the position upon conversion.
- d. The duties of the position for which an Intern NTE is hired do not have to be directly related to the student's academic career goals or particular field of study when the intern NTE is appointed to a temporary position for a "traditional summer job" to perform tasks that do not require subject-matter expertise (e.g., those involving routine clerical work).

#### 8. Schedules.

- a. Interns' schedules must be established in accordance with [5 CFR 610.121](#).
- b. Work schedules must be documented in the Pathways Participant Agreement.
- c. Interns may work full or part-time work schedules.
- d. Interns' class schedules should be considered when establishing work schedules, and work schedules should not interfere with academic schedules.

Examples of appropriate schedules may include the following:

- (1) Alternating working one semester full-time and attending school full-time for one semester;
- (2) Attending school full-time during the fall and spring semesters and working full-time during summer and winter (and possibly spring) breaks; or
- (3) Attending school part-time and working part or full-time.

#### 9. Breaks in the Program.

- a. A break in the Intern Program is defined as a period of time when the intern is working, but unable to attend school or is neither attending classes nor working at GSA. This does not relate to established work schedules.
- b. A student working during the summer break who maintains enrollment for the next school year meets the eligibility requirements for the internship and is not considered a break in the program.
- c. To maintain the intent and integrity of the Intern Program, the restrictions and procedures outlined below will be followed when requesting and approving requests for a break in the program.
  - (1) A break in the program may not exceed one semester or one quarter (depending on how the school's academic year is divided).
  - (2) Only one break in the program is allowed while the participant is in the Intern Program.
  - (3) All requests for a break in the program must be made in writing from the immediate supervisor through reviewers appropriate to the employing office for concurrence, and include documentation to support the request. Requests must be approved by the Human Resources Service Center Director and the file maintained by the servicing Human Resources Office. A request for a break in program that is not approved will be returned to the requesting office.
  - (4) Once approved, the servicing HR office will document the break in program and monitor the student's return to work and/or the educational program from the break within the approved timeframe.

#### 10. Promotion.

- a. An intern may be promoted as long as all eligibility and qualification requirements for the position to which they are promoted are met. However, this provision does not confer entitlement to promotion.
- b. All appointments and promotions are subject to meeting eligibility requirements for Pathways Intern positions and qualification requirements defined in OPM's Qualification Standard for Schedule D, Pathways Internship Positions.
- c. Interns serving on a temporary appointment not-to-exceed date one year are not eligible for promotions.

#### 11. Conversion to the Competitive Service.

- a. An intern who is a U.S. citizen may be noncompetitively converted from the Intern Program to a term or permanent position in the competitive service when the intern has met all the criteria listed below. A checklist is provided in [Appendix E](#) to document that requirements for conversion have been met. An intern may be converted when they have:

- (1) Completed at least 480 hours of work experience acquired through the Intern Program while enrolled as a full- or half-time degree seeking student. It is expected that students will receive appointments of sufficient length to meet the 480-hour requirement. This ensures sufficient time to assess the student's performance and decide that conversion to the competitive service is warranted;
  - (a) Up to 160 hours of the service requirement may be waived in accordance with [5 CFR 362.204\(d\)](#). While up to 160 may be waived, students must complete a minimum service requirement of 320 hours.
  - (b) Requests to waive any of the 480 hours will be submitted to and approved by the Human Resources Service Center Director on a case-by-case basis based on unusual circumstances. Such requests will be prepared by the immediate supervisor, forwarded to the servicing Human Resources Office for concurrence and submitted to the Human Resources Service Center Director for approval.
  - (c) Credit may also be granted for up to 160 of the 480 hours required for conversion for comparable intern experience in accordance with [5 CFR 362.204\(c\)](#).
  - (d) Requests to grant credit for comparable intern experience will be submitted to and approved or disapproved by the Human Resources Service Center Director on a case-by-case basis. Such requests will be prepared by the immediate supervisor and routed as required by the requesting office through the servicing Human Resources Office for approval by the Human Resources Service Center Director.
  - (e) GSA may not grant a credit or waiver (or a combination of a credit and waiver) totaling more than 160 hours of the 480-hour service requirement.
- (2) Completed a course of academic study, within the 180-day period preceding the conversion to the competitive appointment, at a qualifying educational institution conferring a diploma, certificate, or degree;
- (3) Received a favorable recommendation for conversion from the work experience supervisor (whether the work experience was completed at GSA or other agency); and
- (4) Met all the qualification and eligibility requirements for the position to which the intern will be converted and all specific requirements identified in the GSA's Pathways Agreement with the intern.

- b. An intern may be converted to a position in another career field, for which qualified, only when there is no permanent position related to the intern's field of study or career interest as stated in the job application, at the end of the program to which the intern can be appointed.
- c. An intern may be converted to a position in the agency in which he or she has served the internship or to a position in another Federal agency in accordance with [5 CFR 362.107](#).
- d. An intern may be promoted on conversion without regard to the time-in-grade restrictions in [5 CFR 300.604](#), provided they meet all requirements for the position to which they are converted.
- e. An intern who has been non-competitively converted to a term appointment may be subsequently converted to a permanent competitive service position. The effective date of the conversion to a permanent appointment must be before the expiration date of the term appointment.
- f. The provisions of the career transition assistance programs do not apply to the conversions of interns to the competitive service.
- g. The duration of the intern appointment in the excepted service may be counted as the participant's trial period. Time spent as an intern counts toward completion of the probationary period and toward career tenure when:
  - (1) The intern is non-competitively converted to a permanent position in the competitive service upon completion of the program.
  - (2) The conversion occurs in the same agency where the internship was completed.
  - (3) The position to which converted is in the same line of work as the internship.
  - (4) The conversion is without a break in service.
- h. If the employing office wishes to convert an intern to the competitive service upon successful completion of the Intern Program, a personnel action request (PAR) must be submitted to the servicing Human Resources Office to process the conversion. If a conversion action is not processed, the Pathways appointment will expire, and employment will be terminated.
- i. Any intern who fails to maintain eligibility to continue in the Intern Program (e.g., does not meet definition of "student," or fails to adequately progress toward completion of the academic program) must be terminated.
- j. The position to which an intern is converted may be part of a career ladder. The full performance level (FPL) of career ladder positions must have been established and identified at the time the initial Pathways employment opportunity was advertised and must be documented on the PAR and SF50 at the time of the conversion. Employees may only be promoted noncompetitively

up to the FPL of the approved career ladder. Competitive procedures must be used to promote an employee to a higher grade or to place an employee in a career ladder position with a higher FPL than was identified in the original action.

### **Chapter 3: Recent Graduates Program**

1. Recent Graduates Program. In addition to requirements defined in Chapter 1, The GSA Pathways Programs and General Provisions, the following conditions pertain to the Recent Graduates Program.
2. Qualifications and Eligibility.
  - a. To be eligible, applicants must apply within 2 years of completing a qualifying educational program (i.e., within the previous 2 years) the recent graduate must have completed a qualifying associates, bachelors, masters, professional, doctorate, vocational or technical degree or certificate from a qualifying educational institution as defined in this policy. An application will be considered only if it is received no later than 2 years from the date all requirements for a qualifying degree or certificate are met. School transcripts must show the date a degree or certificate was awarded (unofficial copies are acceptable to apply).

However, final official school transcripts with the degree/certificate award date must be provided to HR prior to the final job offer. Certificate programs who do not provide transcripts must provide official school documentation with a conferring date of completion which may be on a diploma, certificate, or degree. Applicants who apply to recent graduate job announcements within the 2-year time limit may be considered and appointed even if the appointment occurs after the 2-year time limit.

- b. The 2-year period of eligibility will be extended for preference eligible veterans who are precluded from applying within the two-year window, due to a military service obligation. In such cases, veterans will have up to 2 years from the date of discharge or release from active duty to apply for the Recent Graduates Program, but eligibility cannot extend for more than 6 years after the date on which the individual completed his or her educational requirements.
- c. OPM's qualification standards for the occupation and grade level of the position being filled will be used to evaluate candidates for positions for appointment under the Recent Graduates Program.

### 3. Appointment.

- a. Under the Recent Graduates Program, individuals are given a 1-year appointment (unless identified as an extended training program, as explained in section 5 of this chapter) to an entry-level position designed to provide a developmental experience that will lead to a career and a permanent position in the Federal Government. Recent graduates are placed in Tenure Group II in the Excepted Service.
- b. Recent graduates are appointed under Schedule D, using the appointing authority provided in [5 CFR 213.3402\(b\)](#). Refer to [OPM's Guide to Processing Personnel Actions, Chapter 11, Table 11-A, Rules 41-43](#) for Nature of Action and Legal Authority Codes and Remarks required to document appointments under the Recent Graduates program.
- c. Recent graduates may be appointed to any entry-level position for which they are qualified (up to the GS-11 level).
- d. Appointment may be made at the GS-11 or GS-12 level in accordance with [5 CFR 362.303\(b\)\(3\)\(ii\) through \(iv\)](#).
- e. Positions to which recent graduates are appointed must provide career advancement (i.e., be part of a career ladder progression) that will enable the participant to gain experience and assume more responsible duties as competence is gained, and be promoted to higher grade levels when all eligibility and qualification requirements are met. The FPL of the career ladder must be identified at time of recruitment and appointment.

- f. The one-year (unless identified as an extended training program in section 5 of this chapter) duration of a recent graduate's appointment in the excepted service is a trial period. Upon conversion to the competitive service, time spent on the recent graduate appointment may be credited toward completion of the probationary period in accordance with [5 CFR Part 315, Subpart H](#).
- g. If a recent graduate is in an extended program (see, section 5 of this chapter) duration of a recent graduate's appointment in the excepted service is a trial period. Upon conversion to the competitive service, time spent on the recent graduate appointment may be credited toward completion of the probationary period in accordance with [5 CFR Part 315, Subpart H](#).

#### 4. Program Requirements.

- a. Within the first 45 days of appointment, the supervisor, in coordination with the recent graduate, will create an IDP that outlines the specific developmental activities designed to help the recent graduate acquire the competencies of the target position in which the recent graduate will be placed upon completion of the program. The developmental activities to be included in the IDP are:
  - (1) At least 40 hours of "formal, interactive training" which may include conference attendance, on-line training, and/or classroom training, must be provided during the year in the program. Mandatory training, such as annual IT security or ethics training, does not count towards the 40-hour requirement; and
  - (2) The IDP will identify appropriate sources and content of developmental activities and formal interactive training and expected timeframes for completion of developmental activities and training.
- b. A panel will be convened to evaluate achievement of training/developmental goals and acquisition of competencies, at a minimum, on a quarterly basis, unless employee performance indicates more frequent evaluations are necessary. A panel will consist of the supervisor of record, the "trainer" (where this role is filled by an individual other than the supervisor), a Human Resources representative (subject to availability), the mentor, and a program management official of equal or higher grade or rank than the supervisor of record. The program management official must be in the same or related occupational field as the recent graduate and may be the employing organization's program manager.
- c. IDPs will be reviewed and revised as necessary to ensure the training activities originally identified are meeting developmental goals.

- d. Within 90 days of appointment, each recent graduate must be assigned a mentor from an organization outside his or her chain of command. The mentor is typically a senior or journey-level GSA employee who can provide the Pathways Programs participant with the guidance and support needed to develop effectively in the workplace serving as:
  - (1) a trusted advisor, to share with the employee a different focus or perspective from the technical emphasis on the job and oversight that the supervisor provides; and
  - (2) a role model who shares his or her expertise with less experienced individuals in order to help the recent graduate understand the workplace culture and effectively build workplace relationships.
- e. The mentor does not have to be in the same occupational field as the recent graduate, but should be available as a counselor to be able to properly advise on work-related and personal workplace issues that may arise.

5. Extended Training Program. In accordance with [5 CFR 362.301](#), Recent Graduate Programs that incorporate a more structured developmental training program that last more than one year, may request approval to have an extended program. The program may not exceed 2 years plus any agency approved extension of up to an additional 120 days. Program offices wishing to participate in an extended program must enter into an Training Agreement with OHRM, see [Appendix F. Training Agreement Template for Recent Graduate Extended Program](#). The Training Agreement must be re-executed between the two offices every three (3) years. If the program office does not have an approved Training Agreement in place or the approved Training Agreement has expired, the office may not operate under the extended program and recent graduates in the program will need to be converted within one year of their initial appointment. The procedures outlined below will be followed when requesting approval for an extended program:

- a. The Program Office (see definitions section, item h, pg. 8.) requesting a Recent Graduate Extended Training program must create a Training Agreement that includes:
  - (1) Proposed length of the program;
  - (2) justification for the extended program;
  - (3) description of the program; and
  - (4) any other factors that demonstrate the need for a longer training period for Recent Graduate hires.
- b. The Training Agreement requests for extended training programs must be reviewed and approved in the following order:

- (1) GSA Heads of Service and Staff Offices (HSSOs) within the requesting organization:
  - (a) Reviews the request to ensure the extended training program is supportable and meets organizational needs.
- (2) HR Service Center Director
  - (a) Reviews the request for merit and feasibility.
- (3) Pathways Program Officer:
  - (a) Reviews the request for adherence to established criteria and guiding regulations.
- (4) Chief Human Capital Officer (CHCO):
  - (a) Reviews the request and supporting documentation; and,
  - (b) renders a final decision based on the merits of the request.
- c. Recent Graduates hired into an extended training program must adhere to the formal training requirements of the program as annotated in the Program Training Plan approved by the OHRM CHCO.

#### 6. Promotion.

- a. Any recent graduate who meets eligibility and OPM qualification requirements, may be promoted. Supervisors must evaluate the quality of each employee's work, level of proficiency demonstrated in the performance of assignments, and ability to perform progressively more complex and responsible work, document successful completion of all training requirements, and provide a recommendation for the promotion by submitting a PAR to approve an employee's promotion to interim grade levels and to the target position if in a career ladder.
- b. A recent graduate will be eligible for promotion only if his or her performance is at least at the fully successful level. There is no entitlement to a promotion.
- c. The intent of the Recent Graduates Program is to provide a developmental experience designed to lead to a career in the Federal service. Therefore, there is no provision for accelerated promotions under the Recent Graduates Program.
- d. The FPL of career ladder positions must be identified at the time of recruitment and appointment, and employees can only be promoted noncompetitively up to the FPL of the approved career ladder. Competitive procedures must be used to promote an employee to a higher grade or to place an employee in a career ladder position with a higher FPL than was identified in the initial action.

#### 7. Movement Between Agencies.

- a. An individual may apply for and accept a new recent graduates appointment with another agency during the Pathways recent graduate appointment period. This

pertains to a recent graduate employed by GSA moving to another agency or a recent graduate of another agency moving to GSA.

- b. The gaining agency must meet all requirements for participating in the Recent Graduates Program.
- c. The gaining agency's plan must identify requirements for Program completion and eligibility for noncompetitive conversion.
- d. To continue in the Recent Graduates Program, the employee must separate from the original employing agency, and the new employing agency must appoint the recent graduate without a break in service.
- e. Time served under the previous agency's Recent Graduates Program is credited toward the 1-year or 2-year (see qualifying extended training programs in section 5 of this chapter) requirement for noncompetitive conversion eligibility to the competitive service. Because there is no break in service, the recent graduate does not begin a new trial period in the Program upon moving to a new agency.
- f. The new appointment will be documented with the appropriate codes and remarks from OPM's "Guide to Processing Personnel Actions." Refer to [OPM's Guide to Processing Personnel Actions, Chapter 11, Table 11-A, Rule 43](#).

#### 8. Conversion to the Competitive Service.

- a. Upon completion of the program requirements a recent graduate may be noncompetitively converted to a competitive service term or permanent position.
- b. In order to be non-competitively converted, the recent graduate must:
  - (1) Be a U.S. citizen.
  - (2) Have successfully completed all the requirements of the Recent Graduates Program as defined in the participant agreement.
  - (3) Have demonstrated successful job performance as documented by a rating of record (or summary rating) of at least Fully Successful or equivalent.
  - (4) Be recommended for conversion by the first-level supervisor.
  - (5) Have met the OPM qualification standard for the competitive service position to which he or she will be converted.
- c. The noncompetitive conversion of a recent graduate must be effective on the date the service requirement is met, or at the end of an agency approved extension, if applicable.
- d. A Recent Graduates Program participant who is non-competitively converted to a competitive service term appointment may be subsequently converted non-competitively to a permanent competitive service position. The effective date

of the conversion to a permanent appointment must be before the expiration date of the term appointment.

- e. A recent graduate may be converted to a permanent or term position at a different agency when the following conditions are met:
  - (1) The employing (or losing) organization documents that the agency is unable to convert the recent graduate to a term or permanent position in the competitive service in the current organizational unit within GSA. The documentation of this must address the reason(s) why conversion did not occur within GSA. These reasons may include unforeseen budgetary constraints; reorganizations; abolishment of positions; or other appropriate reasons. Such a conversion to another agency may not be due to issues related to misconduct, poor performance, or suitability.
  - (2) Conversion must occur on or before the end of the Program period, plus any agency-approved extension.
  - (3) The position at the new agency must have a full performance level that is equivalent or less than the position at the prior agency.

#### **Chapter 4: Presidential Management Fellows (PMF) Program**

1. Presidential Management Fellows (PMF) Program. In addition to requirements defined in Chapter 1, The GSA Pathways Programs General Provisions, the following conditions pertain to the Presidential Management Fellows Program. OPM centrally manages the PMF program, retaining responsibility for soliciting applications, rating applications, and identifying finalists under the PMF Program. This chapter will discuss certain aspects of the PMF program that are open to agency discretion. All other aspects of GSA's PMF program are governed by the provisions in [5 CFR Part 362, Subpart D](#), Presidential Management Fellows Program.
2. Filling Positions.
  - a. **Announcing the job**. All employment opportunities for PMFs at GSA, will be publicized to PMF finalists using OPM's Talent Management System (TMS)

following all system and program requirements. JOAs will identify promotion potential and the FPL of each position posted.

- (1) PMF finalists must apply to a specific opportunity by 11:59 pm (Eastern Standard Time) on the closing date of the announcement to receive consideration.
- (2) PMF applications may be collected via TMS. The JOAs must clearly inform PMF finalists how to apply for a specific opportunity.
- (3) All PMF finalists submitting an application by the closing date will receive consideration for the position. OPM has conducted minimum qualifications analyses for PMF finalists at the GS-09 level. The HR office must conduct qualifications analyses for any position specific technical requirements and for qualifications for positions above the GS-09 level. The OPM General Schedule Qualification Standards will be used to evaluate finalists' qualifications.
- (4) The HR office must also validate PMF finalists' completion of graduate degree requirements through official transcripts or other official documentation from the educational institution.
- (5) Veterans' preference applies and procedures must be followed as outlined in the PMF Guide to Agencies.
- (6) Each PMF job opportunity announcement and selection will be reported to the GSA Pathways Programs Officer.

b. ***Rotational and Developmental Assignments***. Offices wishing to temporarily host a PMF through a temporary developmental or rotational assignments may be announced through OPM's Talent Management System (TMS) to reach PMFs across the federal government.

### 3. Appointment.

- a. Under the PMF program, individuals are given a 2-year appointment to an entry-level position designed to provide a developmental experience that will lead to a career and a permanent position in the Federal Government. Fellows are placed in Tenure Group II in the Excepted Service.
- b. Fellows are appointed under Schedule D, using the appointing authority provided in [5 CFR 213.3402\(c\)](#). Refer to [OPM's Guide to Processing Personnel Actions, Chapter 11, Table 11-A, Rules 41-48](#) for Nature of Action, Legal Authority Codes and Remarks required to document appointments under the PMF program.
- c. Fellows may be appointed to any position for which they are qualified, at the GS-09 through GS-12 level.

4. Work Schedules. A PMF will have a full-time work schedule. In rare circumstances an organization may authorize a part-time work schedule for a limited period of up to six (6) months during the PMF Program if the organization and PMF have determined that it would not negatively impact the fellow's ability to meet all program requirements by the expiration of the PMF's appointment. Part-time work schedules will not be granted for reasons such as to appraise performance or conduct, to finish school, to work on a clerkship, or to take advantage of a scholarship. The following activities must occur for authorization of a part-time work schedule:

- a. The immediate supervisor must submit the request for the part-time work schedule in writing to the Pathways Program Officer through the servicing Human Resources Office after obtaining the concurrence of officials within the employing organization as determined by the organization.
- b. The written request must explain the reasons the part-time work schedule is deemed necessary. For example, a part-time work schedule may be granted if the participant has reasonable accommodation due to a medical condition, illness, or injury, or caregiving responsibilities for family members, but a decision will be made based on the merits of each situation.
- c. The fellow's Pathways Participant Agreement should be updated with the new work schedule information when a part-time work schedule is approved.

5. Program Requirements.

- a. Within the first 90 days of appointment, the supervisor, in coordination with the fellow, will create an IDP that outlines the specific developmental activities designed to help the fellow acquire the competencies of the target position in which they will be placed upon completion of the program. The developmental activities to be included in the IDP are:

- (1) A developmental assignment of 4 to 6 months in duration. Each PMF must be provided at least one full time developmental assignment of at least 4 to 6 months during the fellowship with full time management and/or technical responsibilities consistent with the PMF's IDP, as required by [5 CFR 362.405\(b\)\(4\)](#). One or more additional rotational assignments within or outside of the employing organization may also be provided as part of the fellow's development;
- (2) At least 80 hours of "formal, interactive training" which may include conference attendance, on-line training with a live instructor, and/or classroom training, must be provided each year of the 2 year fellowship. Mandatory training, such as annual IT security or ethics training, does not count towards the 80-hour requirement. However, orientation and other

training provided to fellows by OPM may be counted toward the required training;

- (3) On-the-job training (i.e., daily instruction and guidance designed to prepare the employee to assume progressively more difficult, responsible, and productive work);
  - (4) The IDP will identify appropriate sources and content of developmental activities and formal interactive training and expected timeframes for completion of developmental activities and training; and
  - (5) IDPs will be reviewed and revised as necessary to ensure the training activities originally identified are meeting developmental goals.
- b. Within 90 days of appointment, each PMF will be assigned a mentor who is a managerial employee outside the PMF's chain of command. The relationship with the mentor is to provide counseling on a specific career path and for guidance on professional and educational questions. PMFs may wish to identify an individual they feel would be an appropriate mentor who possesses desired skills, knowledge, and/or perspectives, and negotiate a mentor/mentee relationship with that person.
  - c. PMFs are required to participate in one developmental or rotational assignment (i.e., detail) four (4) to six (6) months in duration to build competencies in the occupation or functional discipline in which the PMF will most likely convert, with management and/or technical responsibilities consistent with the PMF's position description and IDP. The assignment must be outside the PMF's direct chain of command. The following are the primary options for developmental or rotational assignments:
    - (1) The assignment may be within GSA, another Federal agency or certified eligible organizations under the Intergovernmental Personnel Act.
    - (2) A PMF may participate in a GSA-wide or Administration initiative that will provide the PMF with the experience they would have gained through the four (4) to six (6) months developmental assignment.

## 6. Promotion.

- a. Any PMF who meets eligibility and OPM qualification requirements, may be promoted. Supervisors must evaluate the quality of each employee's work and level of proficiency demonstrated in the performance of assignments, document successful completion of all training requirements, and provide a recommendation for the promotion by submitting a PAR to approve an employee's promotion to interim grade levels and to the target position if in a career ladder.

- b. A PMF will be eligible for promotion only if his or her performance is at least at the Fully Successful level. This provision does not confer entitlement to a promotion.
  - c. The FPL of career ladder positions must be identified at the time of recruitment (in the employment opportunity announcement and SF-50 documenting the appointment), and employees can only be promoted noncompetitively up to the FPL of the approved career ladder. During the fellowship appointment, fellows may only be promoted up to the GS-13 level. Promotions above the GS-13 level may only occur on or after conversion to the permanent position, following completion of the PMF Program.
  - d. Upon and after conversion to the competitive service, competitive procedures must be used to promote an employee to a higher grade or to place an employee in a career ladder position with a higher FPL other than was identified for the original appointment. Such actions must be processed in accordance with GSA's merit promotion plan, and are subject to the employee meeting all qualification and eligibility requirements.
7. Movement Between Agencies. Commonly referred to as reappointment. The need for a reappointment may be an option for those agencies unable to convert their PMF into a term or permanent position, due to budget constraints or changes in missions, reorganizations, freezes, etc., and should always be seen as a last resort before leaving the PMF Program. The PMF TMS (Talent Management System) is designed to assist Finalists in obtaining their initial appointment via appointment opportunities; the PMF TMS does not provide a means for soliciting PMF positions for reappointments. Finding such reappointment opportunities are the responsibility of the PMF. PMFs may move to another federal agency at any time during their PMF appointment under the following conditions:
- a. The PMF can only reappoint to a position that is equal to or less than the current position's grade level and target promotion level.
  - b. The PMF must separate from the current agency and the new agency must appoint the participant without a break in service.
  - c. Time served under the previous PMF appointment applies towards the completion of the program at the new employing agency.
  - d. If the move occurs within the first six (6) months of the PMF's appointment, the original appointing agency may request reimbursement of one-quarter of the PMF placement fee from the new appointing agency.
8. Certification Requirements. The PMF coordinator will consult with the PMF throughout the two year program to determine whether all programmatic requirements are met. The

following activities must be completed to be eligible for Executive Resources Board (ERB) evaluation:

- a. An IDP put into place within 90 days of appointment and adhered to throughout the two year program.
  - b. Collaborative relationship maintained with the assigned Mentor.
  - c. Completion of at least 80 hours of formal interactive training per year (160 total) that advance the goals and competencies defined within the IDP.
  - d. Completion of a 4-6 month developmental or rotational assignment.
  - e. [OPM Form 1303](#) completed through Part III.
9. Executive Review Board Certification. Within 45 days of the two year anniversary of the PMF's appointment, the PMF coordinator will submit the certification request to the ERB for evaluation. Once the certification review is approved/disapproved the ERB will complete Part IV of the [OPM Form 1303](#). The PMF coordinator will notify the fellow and all affected parties of the ERB's decision regarding certification. A fellow may not be converted to the competitive service without ERB certification.
10. Conversion to the Competitive Service.
- a. Upon completion of the program requirements a fellow may be noncompetitively converted to a competitive service term or permanent position once they have met the following criteria:
    - (1) Be a U.S. citizen.
    - (2) Have successfully completed all the requirements of the Presidential Management Fellows Program as defined in the agency - participant agreement.
    - (3) Have demonstrated successful job performance as documented by a rating of record (or summary rating) of at least Fully Successful or equivalent; received a favorable ERB certification.
    - (4) Have met the OPM qualification standard for the competitive service position to which he or she will be converted.
  - b. To convert the PMF to the competitive service upon ERB certification and successful completion of the PMF Program, a personnel action request (PAR) must be submitted to the servicing Human Resources Office to process the conversion. If a conversion action is not processed, the Pathways appointment will expire, and employment will be terminated.
  - c. The position to which the fellow is converted may be part of a career ladder. The FPL of career ladder positions must have been established and identified at the time the initial Pathways employment opportunity was advertised and must be documented on the PAR and SF50 at the time of the conversion. Employees may only be promoted noncompetitively up to the FPL of the approved career ladder.

Competitive procedures must be used to promote an employee to a higher grade or to place an employee in a career ladder position with a higher FPL than was identified in the original action.

- d. A fellow may be non-competitively converted to a permanent or term position at a different agency when the following conditions are met:
  - (1) The employing (or losing) organization documents that the agency is unable to convert the PMF to a term or permanent position in the competitive service in the current organizational unit within GSA. The documentation of this must address the reason(s) why conversion did not occur within GSA. These reasons may include unforeseen budgetary constraints; reorganizations; abolishment of positions; or other appropriate reasons. Such a conversion to another agency may not be due to failure to obtain certification from the agency's ERB, misconduct, poor performance, or suitability.
  - (2) Conversion must occur on or before the end of the Program period, plus any agency-approved extension; and
  - (3) The position at the new agency must have a full performance level that is equivalent or less than the position at the prior agency.

**Appendix A. Intern Program Participant Agreement**



**U. S. GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION  
Intern Program Participant Agreement**



<b>Appointee's Full Name:</b>	
<b>Appointing Agency/Sub-Agency:</b>	
<b>Appointment Date (s):</b>	<b>Work Schedule:</b>
Entrance on Duty (EOD) Date : _____	Monday _____ Tuesday _____



<b>Training Requirements</b> (If applicable)
<b>Mentoring</b> (Enter requirements)
<b>Evaluation Procedures.</b> (Summarize elements on which the Intern's performance appraisal will be based)
<b>Minimum Eligibility Requirements for Noncompetitive Conversion (if any).</b>
<p>To be eligible for conversion to the competitive service, an Intern must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Be a U.S. citizen.</li><li>● Successfully complete academic course of study.</li><li>● Complete a minimum of 480 hours of work experience under the Intern Program.</li><li>● Meet the OPM Qualification Standard for the position to which the Intern may be converted.</li><li>● Maintain acceptable performance under the agency's approved performance management system.</li><li>● Receive favorable recommendation for conversion from supervisor.</li></ul> <p><b>It is important to remember that eligibility for conversion does not guarantee that GSA will decide to opt for conversion.</b></p>

<b>SIGNATURES:</b>		
Intern:		
<i>Print Name Above</i>	<i>Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>
Hiring Official/Supervisor:		
<i>Print Name Above</i>	<i>Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>
Human Resources Approving Official:		
<i>Print Name Above</i>	<i>Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>
Educational Institution Representative:		
<i>Print Name Above</i>	<i>Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>

## Appendix B. Recent Graduate Program Participant Agreement



## U. S. GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION Recent Graduate Program Participant Agreement



<b>Appointee's Full Name:</b>	
<b>Appointing Agency/Sub-Agency:</b>	
<b>Appointment Date (s):</b>	<b>Work Schedule:</b>
Entrance on Duty (EOD) Date : _____ (MM/DD/YYYY)	Monday _____ Tuesday _____

Program Not to Exceed (NTE) Date: _____ (MM/DD/YYYY)	Wednesday _____ Thursday _____ Friday _____
<b>Position Title, Series and Grade</b>	<b>Pay</b>
<b>Recent Graduate's Responsibilities:</b>	<b>Hiring Official's/Supervisor's Responsibilities:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Adhere to the Recent Graduate Program requirements</li> <li>● Adhere to an established work schedule</li> <li>● Perform, successfully, the assigned duties listed in your position description</li> <li>● Participate in agency training classes or programs</li> <li>● Create an Individual Development Plan (IDP) with assistance from your manager.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ IDP must include at least 40 hours of formal interactive training</li> <li>○ IDP must be completed within 45 days of your date of hire</li> <li>○ IDPs must be created each year</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Select a mentor within 90 days of your date of hire. Your manager will assist you</li> <li>● Attend regularly scheduled meetings with mentor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Complete Participant Agreement with each Recent Graduate</li> <li>● Provide information on the Recent Graduate Program requirements</li> <li>● Establish a mutually agreeable work schedule</li> <li>● Identify performance goals and evaluation criteria</li> <li>● Help Recent Graduate create an IDP which must be completed 45 days from date of hire</li> <li>● Assist Recent Graduate with the selection of a mentor within 90 days of date of hire             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Mentor must be at an appropriate level outside of the Recent Graduate's chain of command</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Provide information on any special training requirements             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Ensure Recent Graduate participates in at least 40 hours of formal interactive training</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Supervise daily work activities</li> <li>● Identify performance goals and evaluation criteria</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● If the position offers noncompetitive conversion to the competitive service, identify the eligibility requirements for conversion and ensure the Recent Graduate is converted at the end of the Program..</li> </ul>
<b>Work Assignments</b> (Enter brief description of duties or attach a position description)	
<b>Recent Graduates Program Requirements</b> (Enter requirements for continuation and successful completion of Program)	
<b>Recent Graduates Training Requirements</b> (Identify any special training requirements)	
<b>40 hours of formal interactive training each year.</b>	

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<b>Mentoring</b> (Enter instructions on process to select Mentor)
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--

<b>Evaluation Procedures</b> (Summarize elements on which the Recent Graduate's performance appraisal will be based)
--

--

<b>Minimum Eligibility Requirements for Noncompetitive Conversion.</b> (If this position offers noncompetitive conversion, enter any agency specific requirements)
--

To be eligible for conversion to the competitive service, the Recent Graduate must:

- Be a U.S. citizen.
- Successfully complete all Recent Graduate Program requirements.
- Meet the OPM Qualification Standard for the position to which the Recent Graduate may be converted.
- Maintain acceptable performance under the agency's approved performance management system.

**It is important to remember that eligibility for conversion does not guarantee that GSA will decide to opt for conversion.**

SIGNATURES: Recent Graduate Program Participant:
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Print Name Above	Signature	Date
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Hiring Official/Supervisor:
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Print Name Above	Signature	Date
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Human Resources Approving Official:
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Print Name Above	Signature	Date
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**Appendix C. Presidential Management Fellow Program Participant Agreement**



**U. S. GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION  
Presidential Management Fellow (PMF)  
Program Participant Agreement**



<b>Appointee's Full Name:</b>	
<b>Appointing Agency/Sub-Agency:</b>	
<b>Appointment Date (s):</b>	<b>Work Schedule:</b>
Entrance on Duty (EOD) Date : _____ (MM/DD/YYYY)	Monday _____
Program Not to	Tuesday _____
	Wednesday _____
	Thursday _____

Exceed (NTE) Date: _____ (MM/DD/YYYY)	Friday _____
<b>Position Title, Series and Grade</b>	<b>Pay</b>
<b>Fellow's Responsibilities:</b>	<b>Hiring Official's/Supervisor's Responsibilities:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Adhere to the Presidential Management Fellows Program requirements</li> <li>● Adhere to an established work schedule</li> <li>● Perform, successfully, the assigned duties listed in your position description</li> <li>● Observe all workplace rules</li> <li>● Create an Individual Development Plan (IDP) with assistance from your manager. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ IDP must include at least 80 hours of formal, interactive training per year</li> <li>○ IDP must be completed within 90 days of your date of hire</li> <li>○ IDP must be completed each year</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Select a Mentor within 90 days of your date of hire. Your manager will assist you.</li> <li>● Participate in agency training classes or programs</li> <li>● Attend regularly scheduled meetings with mentor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Complete Participant Agreement with each Fellow</li> <li>● Provide information on the Presidential Management Fellows Program requirements</li> <li>● Establish a mutually agreeable work schedule</li> <li>● Identify performance goals and evaluation criteria</li> <li>● Help Fellow create an IDP which must be completed 90 days from date of hire</li> <li>● Assist Fellow with the selection of a mentor within 90 days of date of hire <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Mentor must be at the managerial level outside of the Fellow's chain of command</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Provide information on any special training requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Ensure Fellow participates in at least 80 hours of formal, interactive training per year</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Supervise daily work activities</li> <li>● Identify performance goals and evaluation criteria</li> </ul>
<b>Work Assignments</b> (Enter brief description of duties or attach a position description)	
<b>PMF Program Requirements</b> (Enter requirements for continuation and successful completion of Program)	
<b>PMF Training Requirements</b> (Identify any special training requirements)	
80 hours of formal interactive training each year.	
<b>Mentoring</b> (Enter instructions on process to select Mentor)	

<b>Evaluation Procedures</b> (Summarize elements on which the Fellow's performance appraisal will be based)
<b>Minimum eligibility requirements for noncompetitive conversion. Does this position offer non-competitive conversion?</b> (Include any agency specific requirements)
<p>To be eligible for conversion to the competitive service, the Fellow must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be a U.S. citizen.</li> <li>• Successfully complete all PMF Program requirements.</li> <li>• Meet the OPM Qualification Standard for the position to which the Fellow may be converted.</li> <li>• Maintain acceptable performance under the agency's approved performance management system.</li> <li>• Obtain ERB certification prior to conversion.</li> </ul> <p><b>It is important to remember that eligibility for conversion does not guarantee that the agency will decide to opt for conversion.</b></p>

<b>SIGNATURES:</b>		
<b>PMF Program Participant:</b>		
<i>Print Name Above</i>	<i>Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>
<b>Hiring Official/Supervisor:</b>		
<i>Print Name Above</i>	<i>Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>
<b>Human Resources Approving Official:</b>		
<i>Print Name Above</i>	<i>Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>

### Appendix D. Intern Performance Planning Template

<b>STUDENT NAME:</b>	<b>PLAN DATE:</b>	
<b>ORGANIZATION:</b>		
<b>POSITION TITLE, SERIES, GRADE:</b>		
<b>PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES:</b> By choosing to complete this worksheet, you have taken a proactive step towards capturing feedback and documenting your contributions. Participant contributes to the accomplishment of the organizational goals by:		
Participant completes assignments as instructed	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>

Participant seeks clarification where necessary to complete assignments	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
Participant completes work products timely and thoroughly	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
Participant when directed seeks additional assignments upon completion of assigned workload	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
Participant when directed assists team members and other colleagues in completion of projects or assignments upon request.	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
Participant researches and suggests methods to improve work processes or products	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>

**Part 1: List Major Projects &/Or Tasks**

**Employee Name:** Click here to enter text.

No.	Project Name & Major Task(s)			Dates: (Time Frame during which the employee will serve on the project or task)
1	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	(More can be added)

**Part 2: List Major Projects &/Or Tasks deliverables.**

**Project Deliverables**

No.	Project & Major Goals (The goal(s) of the team)	Plan: (Include the employee's role and primary duties)	Assignment Expectations: (Include the employee's required milestones, expectations, deliverables and timeframes to be achieved)
1	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.

**Part 3: Project &/Or Task Establishment.**

**Project Confirmation (Sign at initiation)**

No.	Supervisor Signature	Employee Signature (I understand my signature does not constitute agreement or disagreement with the plan, but merely verifies I have received the information.)

1	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
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Part 4: Project &/Or Major Task Feedback.

**Project Confirmation**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Project &amp; Major Tasks Results</b> (Describe the results of the employee required expectations, and deliverables? Please address each expectation, and deliverable listed in the assignment expectation section.)	<b>Feedback:</b> (Please address positive contributions the employee made. What worked well? What didn't work well? Please address any areas of improvements, or suggested training.)
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1	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
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Part 5: Project &/Or Major Task Closeout.

**Project Completion (Sign at completion)**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Supervisor Signature</b>	<b>Employee Signature (I understand my signature does not constitute agreement or disagreement with the plan, but merely verifies I have received the information.)</b>
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1	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.	Click here to enter text.
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*Instructions: Supervisor must present and discuss this form with Intern NTE and address questions before requiring signature. Plans must be issued within 60 days of Intern NTE appointment.*

*This form is intended to gain feedback from supervisors on employee individual contributions to projects, major tasks, team goal(s) and objective(s). All information documented on this form will be shared with the employee.*

*This form is intended to be used for Pathways interns who will be working for GSA less than 120 days.*

*For permanent positions, reassignments, details and temporary promotions of 120 days or more do not use this form. When employees are moved to another position within GSA, a performance plan should be communicated to the employee as soon as feasible (normally within 30 days) after the beginning of the change for 120 days or more.*

### Appendix E. Intern Conversion Checklist

STUDENT NAME:	EDUCATION COMPLETION DATE:
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**Conversion requirements:** Pathways Programs Intern participants may be noncompetitively converted to a term, career-conditional or career appointment if the following eligibility requirements are met:

**1. Work experience:**

Completed at least 480 hours of work experience that is related either to the Intern's academic or career goals and has been acquired through a Federal work study program while enrolled as a full- or part-time student seeking a diploma, degree or certificate<sup>1</sup>.

Check the appropriate box(es) below to indicate how the student acquired the 480 hours of creditable work experience required for conversion.

- Pathways Intern Program;
- Working in, but not for, a Federal agency pursuant to a formal work-study agreement comparable to an Intern Program agreement under 5 CFR 362.106 between the agency and an accredited academic institution, including experience as a Student Volunteer as defined in 5 CFR 308;
- Working in, but not for, a Federal agency, pursuant to a written contract comparable to an Intern Program agreement under 5 CFR 362.106 between the agency and an organization officially established to provide Intern experiences to students; - *OR* -
- As an active duty member of the armed forces of the United States (including National Guard and Reserves), as defined in 5 U.S.C.2101, and has been discharged or released from active duty in the armed forces under honorable conditions.

**Exception<sup>2</sup>:** Up to 320 of the 480 work hours required for conversion may be waived if earned under a Pathways Intern appointment and the student has demonstrated high potential, as demonstrated by outstanding academic achievement and exceptional job performance.

- Outstanding academic achievement is demonstrated by an overall grade-point average of 3.5 or higher on a 4.0 scale; standing in the top 10% of the student's graduating class; and/or induction into a nationally-recognized scholastic honor society. Refer to OPM's Qualification Standards for General Schedule Positions for specific guidance on GPA, class standing and nationally-recognized honor societies; - *AND* -
- Exceptional job performance is demonstrated by the student's work-study supervisor's formal evaluation consistent with the agency's performance appraisal program established under an approved performance appraisal system.

**2. Qualifications and eligibility:**

- Completed a course of academic study from an accredited school conferring a diploma, certificate or degree within the 180-day period preceding the conversion;
- Student received a favorable recommendation by an official of the agency in which the job-related skills were acquired;
- Student meets the qualification standards for the position in which he or she will be appointed; - *AND* -
- Student is a U.S. Citizen

**Probationary Period Requirements:** Experience gained as a Pathways Intern can be credited toward completion of the one-year probationary period if the following conditions are met:

- Student will be converted to a career-conditional or career appointment;
- The work experience was gained in the same agency;
- The work experience is in the same line of work; - *AND* -
- The work experience is followed by no more than a single break in service that does not exceed 30 calendar days. Leave without pay in excess of 22 work days is not creditable.

**Approvals:** Print Supervisor's Name:

Signature:

Date:

<sup>1</sup>Eligible certificate programs are those issued from qualifying educational institutions and that are equivalent to at least one academic year of full-time study that is part of an accredited college-level, technical, trade, vocational or business school curriculum [5 CFR 362.102].

<sup>2</sup>This exception should rarely, if ever, be applied. Prior to making the Pathways Intern appointment, it should be determined that the projected time frame needed to complete the educational program will be sufficient to allow completion of the required 480 work-experience hours.

Print HR Specialist's Name:	Signature:	Date:

**Appendix F. Training Agreement Template for Recent Graduate Extended Program**

\*\*\*All items italicized require updating specific to the extended program\*\*\*

**Recent Graduate Training Agreement for  
*NAME OF TRAINING PROGRAM***

**I. INTRODUCTION**

- a. Agencies may request a two-year Recent Graduate training program in accordance with section 362.301(a) of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). The *PROGRAM NAME*, includes structured developmental requirements lasting (*insert duration*), with a maximum duration of 2 years plus an approved extension of up to 120 days.

## II. POSITIONS COVERED

- a. Any position within *PROGRAM NAME*, at any General Schedule grade (or equivalent level under another pay and classification system, including the Federal Wage System), for which the individual is qualified.

## III. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

- a. **Program Length:** *What is the exact duration of the extended training program (e.g., 1.5 years, 24 months)?*
- b. **Program Description:** *Briefly describe the overall program.*
- c. **Program Objectives:** *What are the key goals and desired outcomes of the extended training program?*
- d. **Justification:** *Why is an extended period of training beyond one year required?*
- e. **Training & Development Requirements:** *Are there any specific training or development requirements for program participants? What are the core components of the program (e.g., coursework, mentorship, rotational assignments, research projects)? Include a timeline for program milestones and completion dates.*
- f. **Performance Management & Development Planning:** *How will participant performance be evaluated and how will their development plans be managed?*
- g. **Conversion Requirements:** *What are the criteria for successful completion of the program?*

## IV. PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

- a. The *PROGRAM NAME* program office will monitor and evaluate of the program's effectiveness to ensure compliance with 5 CFR 362, including:
  - a) Track participant progress and program completion rates;
  - b) Evaluate the program's effectiveness in meeting its objectives and ensuring participants develop the necessary skills and knowledge;
  - c) Report training plan and program metrics annually to GSA's Pathways Program Office for Chief Human Capital Officer (CHCO) review and approval to ensure program effectiveness and compliance with 5 CFR 362. The program metrics during the one year reporting period must include, but are not limited to the following:

- (1) Recruitment Strategies
- (2) Total Number of Applicants
- (3) Total Number of Hires
- (4) Program Completion Rate
- (5) Outplacement Data (i.e., location, series, pay grade, etc).
- (6) Attrition Rate (e.g., resigned from the program, transferred to another position and/or occupational series, etc).
- (7) Retention Rate (e.g., percentage of participants who retain and continue to apply the knowledge and skills post outplacement).

**V. TERMINATION, SUSPENSION, OR REVOCATION**

- a. The CHCO of GSA may revoke this Agreement when use of the Pathways Programs is inconsistent with Executive Order 13562, part 362 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations, GSA’s Pathways policy or this training agreement.

**VI. EFFECTIVE DATE AND SIGNATURES**

- a. This *PROGRAM NAME* Training Agreement shall be effective upon the signature of OHRM and the Program Office authorized officials for a period of three years. The training plan will be subject to re-evaluation pending any pertinent modifications as outlined in section V. of this document.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*INSERT PROGRAM OFFICER NAME*  
*TITLE*  
*PROGRAM NAME*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*INSERT CHCO NAME*  
 Chief Human Capital Officer  
 Office of Human Resources Management

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Date