

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration	NOAA Administrative Order 202-1109	
NOAA ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER SERIES	DATE OF ISSUANCE April 26, 2021	EFFECTIVE DATE April 26, 2021
SUBJECT NOAA Merit Assignment Plan		

SECTION 1. PURPOSE.

This Order establishes the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s (NOAA) policy to ensure that qualified candidates are considered for assignment to positions in the competitive service, based solely on job-related evaluation procedures. The purpose of this Order is to implement the Merit Assignment Plan (MAP) policy for competitive service positions throughout NOAA. MAP provides broad guidance to NOAA’s Office of Human Capital Services (OHCS), also referred to as the Servicing Human Resources Office (SHRO).

This Order updates NOAA’s policy to comply with the Department of Commerce (DOC) Administrative Order (DAO) 202-335, Merit Assignment Program (Effective Date: June 15, 2017). It removes the limitation of referring only 10 candidates on a MAP certificate of eligibles and adjusts referral certificates expiration to 30 calendar days, with the possibility of an extension approval for up to 30 additional days on an as-needed, case-by-case basis if requested. This Order also describes the flexibility to share MAP certificates of eligibles, as appropriate, and how to apply “due weight” within the selection process and special priority consideration.

SECTION 2. SCOPE.

.01 This Order establishes the requirements for competitive service promotions, selections, and assignments to positions in NOAA when made under MAP procedures. It applies to positions filled at GS-1 through GS-15 and Commerce Alternative Personnel System (CAPS)-equivalent positions in the competitive service and covered by 5 CFR 335.

.02 It does not apply to competitive service actions within the following categories:

- a. Non-competitive hiring actions (i.e., positions filled under a special non-competitive hiring authority);
- b. The Senior Executive Service;
- c. Positions in the Excepted Service;
- d. Positions filled within the Foreign Service; and
- e. Positions and employees in the NOAA Commissioned Officer Corps.

SECTION 3. DEFINITIONS.

.01 Principal Human Resources Manager (PHRM): The appointing officer with delegated authority and responsibility to develop and administer NOAA's MAP policy, in accordance and compliance with, DOC policy, rules, and regulations. Provides advice and guidance to the Enterprise Services Center in the implementation of policies, provisions of applicable collective bargaining agreements, and the delivery of all assigned human resources transactional services.

.02 Enterprise Services Center (ESC): The contracted human resources (HR) service provider, also referred to as the SHRO, which carries out NOAA competitive service functions. The ESC must comply with this Order.

.03 Quality Assurance and Accountability Division: Provides program oversight and evaluation of HR transactional services provided within the OHCS. Ensures that HR operations and programs comply with applicable laws, regulations, as well as DOC and NOAA procedures and plans through program evaluation, monitoring, and corrective action.

SECTION 4. POLICY.

.01 It is NOAA policy to select candidates for competitive service positions in accordance with Merit System Principles and DOC Merit Assignment Program DAO 202-335. Positions covered by this Order will be filled solely based on merit, fitness, and qualifications without regard to non-merit reasons and without favoritism or discrimination based on personal relationships or patronage; therefore, strictly based according to job-specific criteria.

.02 All qualified applicants and employees shall receive consideration without regard to the following:

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| a. Age; | j. Political affiliation; |
| b. Race; | k. Sexual orientation; |
| c. Color; | l. Labor organization affiliation or non-affiliation; |
| d. Religion; | m. Status as a parent; |
| e. Sex (e.g., gender identity); | n. Any other factor(s) stated in the Secretary's Policy Statement on Equal Employment Opportunity; or |
| f. National origin; | o. Any other non-merit-based factor. |
| g. Disability; | |
| h. Genetic information; | |
| i. Marital status; | |

.03 All documents attached to this Order are considered direct extensions to this Order and, therefore, serve as a component of the policy. Job opportunity announcements and all paid advertising for recruitment must include a statement that NOAA is an equal opportunity employer.

SECTION 5. RESPONSIBILITIES.

.01 Per DAO 202-250, Delegation of Authority for Human Resources Management (Effective Date: April 30, 2009), HR management responsibilities under this Order are delegated to the PHRM. The PHRM may further designate authority to administer and deliver specific HR

management programs and services to subordinate employees.

.02 In summary, this Order's responsibilities are prescribed as following:

- a. OHCS oversees MAP to ensure fair and equitable treatment of all applicants for all positions.
- b. Selecting Officials assist with recruitment outreach and options to locate qualified candidates when filling positions while adhering to Merit Systems Principles.
- c. Subject Matter Expert (SME) Panel provides and makes recommendations to the SHRO for technical and professional positions in which his or her expertise will benefit the hiring process.
- d. Employees/Applicants submit all required application materials specified in the Job Opportunity Announcement or when requested.

SECTION 6. REFERENCES.

.01 5 U.S.C. 2301 Merit System Principles

.02 5 U.S.C. 2302 Prohibited Personnel Practices

.03 5 CFR 335 Promotion and Internal Placement

.04 U.S. Department of Commerce DAO 202-335, Merit Assignment Program

.05 U.S. Department of Commerce DAO 202-250, Delegation of Authority for Human Resources Management

SECTION 7. EFFECT ON OTHER ISSUANCES.

An electronic copy of this Order will be posted on the NOAA Office of the Chief Administrative Officer website under the Administrative Programs' NOAA Administrative Issuances section via <http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/~ocao/index.html>.



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Performing the Duties of Under Secretary
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Office of Primary Interest:
Office of Human Capital Services
All NOAA Line and Staff Offices