

WHAT CAN EMPLOYEES DO?

1. Get your Official Personnel Folder (OPF) from HR.

- a. Keep a copy of this at home, just in case management deletes your OPF, makes unauthorized changes to it, or restricts your access to agency communication systems.
- b. Your OPF is a collection of records that establishes your federal employment history (e.g., positions, grades, pay, veteran's preference, and personnel actions).
- c. RIF decisions are based solely on the information in your OPF, even if it is incorrect or incomplete.

2. Verify the Information in your OPF.

Employees should verify that their OPFs contain accurate information, including but not limited to:

- a. Your contact information, including mailing address.
- b. Standard Form (SF) 50
 - Lines 15 to 22:
 - occupational series,
 - grade,
 - position description title,
 - competitive area,
 - competitive level within occupational series, and
 - organization.
 - Lines 23 to 33:
 - veterans' preference (e.g., Form DD 214),
 - veterans' preference for RIF,
 - appointment (tenure) type (e.g., competitive service),
 - service computation date, and

- work schedule.
- Lines 34 to 39:
 - Service type,
 - duty station, and
 - bargaining unit status.
- c. Military service credit (e.g., Form DD 214).
- d. Position Description (PD) and previous changes (e.g., Optional Form 8).
- e. Point of contact to correct errors in your OPF.
- f. Any changes in your competitive area or level within the past year.

3. Service Computation Date

This number reflects your years of federal employment and any years of military service that you previously converted to federal employment credit. This number determines your right to bump or retreat.

4. Review your Duty Station

- a. Competitive areas and levels are determined by duty station, even if the employee works from a different location.
- b. Agencies may put an employee who works remotely in their own competitive area or level, eliminating or reducing assignment (bump or retreat) rights.

5. Review your Performance Ratings

- a. Make sure that your last three annual performance ratings are correctly recorded in your OPF.
- b. Performance ratings can be more important than length of service in determining your fate under RIF. For example:
 - i. Employees with a current rating of “minimally unsuccessful” or below have few or no right to bump or retreat into other positions.

- ii. Performance ratings are converted into “years of service” than are added to your length of service. (“Outstanding” adds 20 years, “Exceeds Fully Successful” adds 16 years, and “Fully Successful” adds 12 years.
- iii. For example, an employee with 3 years of service and an “Outstanding” rating, can have bump or retreat priority over an employee with 10 years of service and a “Fully Successful” rating.
- c. HR personnel determine your RIF performance credit using solely the performance ratings recorded in your OPF, whether or not the information is accurate.

6. Update your Skills, Qualifications, and Education in your OPF.

- a. You can only be assigned to (or bump or retreat into) a position for which you qualify, and HR personnel will make that determination based solely on the information in your OPF.
- b. Your OPF should show that you are not only qualified but will also be able to get up to speed relatively quickly.
- c. Include all of your skills, even if you:
 - i. developed them in the private sector or during military service,
 - ii. don’t use them in your current position, or
 - iii. haven’t used them in a long time.
- d. Every Qualification: If you want to be considered for assignment to a particular position, your OPF must reflect that you meet every qualification for the job.
- e. Your Work: Add a description of the work that you actually do that is not mentioned in your PD, especially the parts that will show that you are qualified for other positions.
- f. Awards: Add any accolades you’ve received, including monetary and time-off and team awards.
- g. Education: Update your education information to include all degrees and certifications.

7. Review Positions in your Competitive Area

Request a list of all positions in your competitive area to ensure that the agency is correctly ranking you for retention. Ask for the following information about each position:

- Occupational group/series/code
- Occupational title
- GS Grade or prevailing wage rate
- Whether encumbered or vacant
- Whether or not funded (or funding requested in the President's Budget) for FY2025 or FY2026
- Work schedule (e.g., part-time, full-time, or seasonal)
- Type of appointment (e.g., permanent, temporary, or term)
- Qualifications
- Position description

8. Review your Pension Contributions and Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) Assets

- a. Instead of credit towards retirement, some separated employees may want to have all of their pension contributions refunded to them (with interest).
- b. Separated employees should review their options for dealing with TSP assets.

9. Other Possible Options

Ask about your eligibility for:

- Voluntary Early Retirement (VERA),
- Voluntary Separation Incentive Pay (VSIP),
- Discontinued Service Retirement (DSR),
- Severance pay,
- Unemployment,
- Career transition services.