

Department of Homeland Security
DHS Directives System
Directive Number: 255-05
Revision Number: 01
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Merit Promotion

I. Purpose

This Directive establishes the merit promotion policy for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS or Department) and serves to ensure consistency, fairness, and equity in merit promotion programs and activities throughout the Department.

II. Scope

- A. This Directive applies throughout DHS, unless exempted by statutory or federal regulatory authority, or as otherwise indicated herein.
- B. This Directive is applicable to DHS competitive service positions.
- C. This Directive supersedes Directive 255-05, Merit Staffing.

III. Authorities

- A. Title 5, United States Code (U.S.C.) Chapter 33, "Examination, Selection and Placement"
- B. 5 U.S.C. § 2301, "Merit System Principles"
- C. Title 5 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 335, "Promotion and Internal Placement"

IV. Responsibilities

- A. **DHS Chief Human Capital Officer (CHCO):**
 - 1. Ensures the DHS Merit Promotion Program and policy are based on the Merit System Principles as outlined in 5 U.S.C. § 2301.
 - 2. Develops, promulgates, implements, and evaluates merit promotion policy, procedures, and activities.
 - 3. Oversees the establishment of the Department's Merit Promotion Program goals and objectives.

4. Periodically reviews Component policies and guidance for compliance with the requirements outlined in this policy.

B. Component Heads:

1. Comply with the policy set forth herein, the associated DHS Instruction 255-05-001, Merit Promotion, and any applicable federal laws, rules, and regulations.

2. Provide open, systematic, and equitable processes that ensure positions are filled according to merit factors.

3. Review existing labor agreement(s) and ensure compliance with its bargaining obligations.

C. Executive Director, Headquarters Human Resources Management and Services assumes the responsibilities listed under section IV.B. for all Support Components with the exception of the National Protection and Programs Directorate (NPPD), the Office of Inspector General (OIG), and the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC).

D. Heads of NPPD, OIG, and FLETC assume the responsibilities listed under section IV.B. for their respective Support Component.

E. Component Human Resources Directors:

1. Ensure the efficient and effective administration of merit promotion activities.

2. Comply with the policy set forth herein, the associated DHS Instruction 255-05-001, Merit Promotion, and any applicable federal laws, rules, and regulations.

3. Oversee the development and maintenance of their respective Component policies and guidance.

V. Policy and Requirements

A. Component merit promotion programs are based on the Merit System Principles outlined in 5 U.S.C. § 2301.

B. Each Component develops policies and guidance for merit promotion programs and activities in accordance with this Directive, the associated DHS Instruction 255-05-001, Merit Promotion, all DHS supplemental guidance, and applicable federal laws, rules, and regulations.

C. Actions taken under this Directive, whether in the identification, qualification, evaluation, or selection of candidates, are made without regard to political, religious, or labor organization affiliation or non-affiliation, marital status, race, color, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, non-disqualifying physical disability, or age, and based solely on job-related criteria.

D. Due weight is given for performance appraisals and awards in merit promotion activities.

VI. Questions

Address questions or concerns regarding this Directive to the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer.



Chip Fulghum
Acting Deputy Under Secretary for Management

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Date