

DoD Acquisition Workforce Hiring Authorities as of 27 April 2020

The Department of Defense (DoD) has a robust Acquisition Workforce (AWF) which consists of approximately 180,000 military and civilian employees. The DoD appoints over 8,000 new civilian hires annually; therefore, DoD must provide managers and human resource professionals access to efficient hiring authorities to ensure the right candidates are hired in a timely fashion to support the DoD acquisition mission. Over recent years, DoD has been granted a number of special AWF hiring authorities to expedite the process. The AWF is defined as positions and their incumbents so designated pursuant to the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act, Chapter 87, 10 U.S.C. 1721(a). These positions include acquisition functions, as the predominant (i.e., greater than 50 percent) duty in a specific career field. They do not include wage grade, clerical, indirect hire foreign national, non-appropriated fund, or political appointee positions.

Below is a description of the DoD and AcqDemo related hiring authorities followed by a table with technical details for each authority.

DoD Hiring Authorities (Applicable to organizations with members in the Acquisition Workforce):

I. Direct Hire Authority for Certain Personnel of the Department of Defense USD(P&R) Memorandum dated April 2, 2020. (Section 1109 of NDAA for FY 2020)

Provides authority for DoD Components to non-competitively appoint qualified candidates to competitive service positions in the DoD and suspends other hiring authorities.

II. DHA for DoD Post-Secondary and Recent Graduates (Section 1106 of the NDAA for Fiscal Year 2017; and Section 1102 of the NDAA for Fiscal Year 2019)

Provides that the Secretary of Defense may recruit and appoint qualified current post-secondary students and recent graduates directly to competitive service positions in professional and administrative occupations without regard to sections 3309 through 3318, 3327, and 3330 of title 5, U.S.C. and corresponding CFR provisions related to recruitment and appointment. This DHA may be used for positions in professional and administrative occupations at the General Schedule (GS)-11 level and below (or equivalent).

Specific Hiring Authorities and Technical Details

Hiring Authority and Governing Statute, Regulation, Policy	Expiration Date	Common Uses/Other Features	Public Notice	Special Requirements for Consideration of Veterans
<p>Direct Hire Authority for Certain Personnel of the Department of Defense</p> <p>Statute: Section 1109 of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 amended Section 9905 of title 5, United State Code (U.S.C.) to incorporate, streamline, and simplify certain Department of Defense (DoD) civilian hiring authorities. It adds covered positions for which the authority may be used and suspends other hiring authorities. Section 9905 of title 5, U.S.C., authorizes the Secretary of Defense to appoint qualified</p>	September 30, 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointment authority delegated to Secretaries of Military Departments and Directors of Defense Agencies and DoD Field Activities with appointing authorities. • General Schedule (GS) 15 and below (or equivalent) pay grades • Modified/ Streamlined Priority Placement Program applies • ICTAP & RPL do not apply • Covers (10) position categories, but specifically positions in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics, including technician positions, within the defense acquisition workforce, or any category of acquisition positions within the DoD designated by the Secretary as a shortage or critical need category, as outlined in Table 1 (Acquisition Career Fields). 	Not Required	<p>No. Veterans' preference does not apply when selecting individuals under this DHA. Section 9905 of title 5, U.S. Code (U.S.C.) authorizes the Secretary of Defense to non-competitively appoint qualified candidates to certain positions in the competitive service without regard to chapter 33, subchapter I of title 5, U.S.C., other than sections 3303 and 3328.</p>

Hiring Authority and Governing Statute, Regulation, Policy	Expiration Date	Common Uses/Other Features	Public Notice	Special Requirements for Consideration of Veterans
<p>candidates to certain positions in the competitive service in the DoD without regard to chapter 33, subchapter I of title 5, U.S.C., other than sections 3303 and 3328. As a matter of policy, sections 3321, 3323 and 3326 of chapter 33, subchapter I of title 5, U.S.C., and corresponding Code of Federal Regulations provisions will continue to apply. Appointments may be made on a permanent, term, or temporary basis using legal authority code Z5CAC with a legal authority description of "Modified Direct Hire Auth, Section 1109; PL, 116-92, dated 12/20/2019"</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Components have flexibility to define covered AWF positions using the requirements in 10 U.S.C.1721. • No limitations on the number of hires using this authority. • No requirement for designation of a shortage of candidates or a critical hiring need for positions/individuals covered. • Does not cover non-AWF direct support positions supporting AWF positions less than 51% or more of the support position's time. 		<p>Merit factors shall be the basis for selecting individuals for positions.</p>
<p>Direct Hire Authority for DoD Post-Secondary and Recent Graduates</p> <p>Statute: Section 1106 of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2017 provides that the Secretary of Defense may recruit and appoint qualified current post-secondary students and recent graduates directly to competitive service positions in professional and administrative occupations.</p> <p>Statute: Section 1102 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019 amended in the following manner: increasing the limitation on the number of appointments made under this authority during a fiscal year from 15 percent to 25 percent of the total number of hires made into professional and administrative occupations within the Department of Defense at the GS-11 level and below (or equivalent) under competitive examining procedures during the previous fiscal year.</p>	<p>September 30, 2025</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competitive - Permanent (Career, Career-Conditional), Term and Temporary Appointments. • For the purpose of this authority, this DHA may be used by DoD components participating in AcqDemo for DAWIA coded and Direct Support positions at the Broadband I (post-secondary) level • Specific PPP exemption authorized when filling positions under this authority. • ICTAP clearance not required. • Appointments in a calendar year may not exceed 25 percent of the total number of hires made into professional and administrative occupations within the Department of Defense at the GS-11 level and below (or equivalent) under competitive examining procedures during the previous fiscal year. • Allocations set by DCPAS by 31 October of each calendar year. 	<p>Yes – however, “traditional” JOA n/a</p>	<p>Qualified candidates with veterans' preference should be considered when best meet mission requirements</p>

Acquisition Workforce Personnel Demonstration Project (AcqDemo) Hiring Authorities (Applicable only to organizations participating in AcqDemo):

I. Direct Hire Appointment for the Business Management and Technical Management Career Path

The Head of an AcqDemo Participating Organization may appoint: 1) qualified candidates possessing at least a baccalaureate degree required by OPM or DoD qualification standards covering acquisition positions and/or 2) qualified candidates for those non-AWF positions involving 51% or more of time in direct support of acquisition positions. The positions must be in an acquisition career field classified to the Business and Technical Management Professional, NH, career path without regard to the provisions of 5 U.S.C. chapter 33, subchapter I (other than sections 3303, 3308 and 3328 of such title).

II. Veteran Direct Hire Appointments for the Business Management and Technical Management Professional and Technical Management Support Career Paths

The Head of a Participating Organization may appoint qualified Veteran candidates to acquisition positions in an acquisition career field and to those non-AWF positions involving 51% or more of time in direct support of an acquisition position classified to either the Business and Technical Management Professional, NH, career path or to the Technical Management Support, NJ, career path. The term “veteran” for this authority has the meaning given that term in 38 U.S.C. section 101.

III. Acquisition Student Intern Appointments

The Head of a Participating Organization, without regard to the provisions of 5 U.S.C. chapter 33, subchapter I (other than sections 3303, and 3328 of such title), may appoint candidates enrolled in a program of undergraduate or graduate instruction at an institution of higher education leading to either:

- A baccalaureate degree in a course of study required by OPM qualification standards for an acquisition position in an acquisition career field; or
- A degree the completion of which (including any additional essential credit hours or related experience in an acquisition-related field as defined by DoD internal issuances) provides competencies, knowledge, skills, etc., directly linked to an acquisition position’s requirements (selective placement or quality ranking factors) for one of the acquisition career fields.
- An “institution of higher education” for this purpose has the same meaning as that term is defined in Sections 101 and 102 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001). Appointments under this authority may be made using a term appointment authority or the Pathways appointment authority.

IV. Scholastic Achievement Appointment

AcqDemo establishes a Scholastic Achievement Appointment that provides the authority to appoint candidates with degrees to acquisition positions with positive education requirements without regard to the provisions of subchapter I of chapter 33 of Title 5, U.S.C. (other than sections 3303 and 3328 of such title). This authority allows for competitive appointment to acquisition positions classified to either the NH-II or NH-III broadband level of the Business Management and Technical Management Professional career path. Candidates may be appointed under this procedure if:

- They have at least a baccalaureate degree required by OPM or DoD qualification standards, or a degree the completion of which (including any additional essential credit hours or specialized experience in an acquisition-related field as identified by DoD internal issuances) provides competencies, knowledge, skills, etc., directly linked to an acquisition position’s requirements for one of the acquisition career fields plus any selective factors
- The candidate has a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.25 or better (on a 4.0 scale) in those courses in those fields of study that are specified in the OPM Qualification Standards for the occupational series and an overall undergraduate GPA of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale; and
- The appointment is into permanent or term position at a pay level within the NH-II broadband level basic pay range. Appointments may also be made to the NH-III broadband level on the basis of graduate education and/or experience, but with the requirement of a GPA of at least 3.5 on a scale of 4.0 for graduate courses in the field of study required for the occupation.

(AcqDemo) Specific Hiring Authorities and Technical Details (Applicable only to organizations participating in AcqDemo)

Hiring Authority	Expiration Date	Governing Statute, Regulation, Policy Common Uses/Other Features	Public Notice	Special Requirements for Consideration of Veterans
<p>DHA for AcqDemo Business and Technical Management Career Path (NH)</p> <p>Regulation: Federal Register Notice 82 FR 52104-52172 dated November 9, 2017 and 10 U.S.C. 1762. For these authorities, Participating Organizations may appoint qualified candidates without regard to the provisions of 5 U.S.C., Chapter 33, Subchapter 1, other than 3303, 3308, and 3328.</p>	December 31, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applies to all AWF positions and non-AWF positions involving 51% or more of time in direct support to the AWF, in all broadband levels of the NH career path • Competitive - Permanent (Career, Career-Conditional), Term & Temporary Appointments • Modified/ Streamlined Priority Placement Program Applies • ICTAP clearance not required • No limitations on the number of hires using this authority however, participating organizations may implement hiring controls if necessary • No requirement for designation of a shortage of candidates or a critical hiring need for positions/individuals covered 	Not Required	Qualified candidates with veterans' preference should be considered when best meet mission requirements
<p>Veteran DHA for AcqDemo NH and Technical Management Support Career Path (NJ)</p>	December 31, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applies to all AWF positions and non-AWF positions involving 51% or more of time in direct support to the AWF, filled by veterans, in all broadband levels of the NH and NJ career path • Competitive - Permanent (Career, Career-Conditional), Term & Temporary Appointments • Modified/ Streamlined Priority Placement Program Applies • ICTAP clearance not required • No limitations on the number of hires using this authority however, participating organizations may implement hiring controls if necessary • No requirement for designation of a shortage of candidates or a critical hiring need for positions/individuals covered 	Not Required	Qualified candidates with veterans' preference should be considered when best meet mission requirements
<p>Acquisition Student Intern Appointments</p>	December 31, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applies to AWF positions and those non-AWF positions involving 51% or more of time in direct support to the AWF in all broadband levels of the NH and NJ demo career paths • Competitive term appointment with potential for non-competitive conversion to permanent (career, career conditional), term or temporary appointment • PPP Clearance not required; exemption approved February 1, 2019 • ICTAP clearance not required • No limitations on the number of hires using this authority however, participating organizations may implement hiring controls if necessary 	Not Required	Qualified candidates with veterans' preference should be considered when best meet mission requirements

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No requirement for designation of a shortage of candidates or a critical hiring need for positions/individuals covered • Student intern relocation incentive available 		
Scholastic Achievement Appointment	December 31, 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applies to AWF positions only in all broadband levels of the three demo career paths • Competitive - Permanent (Career, Career-Conditional), Term & Temporary Appointments • ICTAP clearance not required • Modified/ Streamlined Priority Placement Program Applies • No limitations on the number of hires using this authority however, participating organizations may implement hiring controls if necessary • No requirement for designation of a shortage of candidates or a critical hiring need for positions/individuals covered • No recency of degree requirements 	Not Required	Qualified candidates with veterans' preference should be considered when best meet mission requirements