

**NIH**  
**Employee Placement Program**  
**(Non-Union)**  
**For Employees Designated as Affected**

## **I. Purpose:**

The purpose of the Employee Placement Program (EPP) is to assist employees affected by consolidation, reorganization, or competitive sourcing to secure alternative employment at NIH. The EPP outlines the allocation distribution, job consideration and decision making processes, and other policies and procedures that will be followed for employees impacted by continuing restructuring initiatives. It transmits NIH-wide guidance both for providing placement opportunities for affected employees, and placement into permanent NIH positions for those employees who do not secure alternative employment at the time of a Most Efficient/Effective Organization (MEO) stand-up.

These policies and procedures, which provide impacted employees with streamlined job consideration procedures, options and offers for placement while continuing to receive consideration for other vacancies are consistent with the commitment by the Department of Health and Human Services and the National Institutes of Health to assist employees impacted by restructuring initiatives. In conjunction with the Employee Placement Program, affected employees also will receive, through the NIH Transition Center, a variety of services that are specifically designed to facilitate their retraining and their reassignment, and help them find and successfully compete for jobs. These include career transition workshops; career counseling; assessment of aptitudes, skills and/or educational development; job development; and placement services. For affected employees with disabilities, The NIH Transition Center will provide reasonable accommodations to meet their needs.

To assist in this corporate effort, managers are encouraged to proactively reassign affected employees to other positions in their ICs when they have determined that the affected employee will not be reassigned to the MEO once it is implemented. Managers are also encouraged to use their position management flexibility -- such as filling positions at the lowest practical grade level. Best practices regarding position management include:

- Establishing the lowest number of positions essential to accomplishing the functions of the organization;
- Arrange developmental details to other positions to enable affected employees to acquire new skills with reasonable or adequate training. The appropriateness of the training will be determined by the NIH Transition Center in consultation with the OHR and the IC. Where specific aptitudes have been established as an essential requirement of the job, assessment or testing will be carried out to determine appropriate training. The duration of training may range from 3 to 12 months based on the skill gap assessment and level of training required to reduce the identified gap to enable the affected employee to meet minimum requirements.
- Employment at the “entry” or “technician” level whenever possible to ensure a balance between employees who perform the full performance level duties of the unit and the development of employees who perform more routine and lower level tasks; and,

- Establishing positions in such a way as to encourage career development, cross-training, and succession planning, consistent with the objective to recruit and retain a diversified work force.

## **II. Eligibility:**

Eligibility for placement through the EPP is based on three factors – position status, employment status, and official notification of eligibility. Specifically, to be eligible for placement through the EPP:

1. The employee must be permanently assigned to a position that has been officially identified as being affected by initiatives such as competitive sourcing, reorganization, consolidation, etc.;
2. The employee must be serving in a permanent career or career conditional appointment in the competitive or excepted service as authorized by Title 5 of the United States Code or other Titles of the United States Code, as appropriate; and,
3. The employee is in receipt of an active official notification letter that provides eligibility for EPP services.

## **III. Affected Employee Notification, Assistance and Registration:**

### **A. Employee Notification:**

Office of Human Resources (OHR) will provide written notification to employees designating them as affected, indicating that they are eligible for placement, and provide them with an EPP registration form. Timing of the receipt of notification will vary, and will be executed during a pre-established period prior to a MEOs stand-up date.

### **B. Employee Assistance:**

Employees impacted by the restructuring initiative will be provided with the name of an OHR representative and Transition Center contact who can provide assistance in developing or reviewing a resume; career counseling in view of career interests, experience, skills, training/education, and existing grade level or promotion potential; and answer questions or make arrangements for him/her to discuss matters with other technical or management staff.

### **C. EPP Registration Process:**

A representative from the Office of Human Resources will register eligible employees into the EPP. Employees will be asked to provide basic information about work history, education, skills, and occupational interests; and will be required to submit a current resume as part of their registration package. EPP registrants will be asked to make an appointment with a designated OHR representative to review and validate their registration information before finalization and activation of their EPP record.

An OHR representative will make qualification determinations. Employees will be registered at their current grade within their local commuting area. Registrants may also request assignment to a position at a lower grade, and/or in a different commuting area.

**D. Enhancement of Placement Opportunities:**

During the registration process, individuals will be asked to make specific decisions that could influence their placement consideration through the EPP. Such personal decisions should be weighed carefully as they may impact the registrant's current and/or future placement opportunities. The identified OHR representative and Transition Center contact are available resources and can provide information or resources for making such decisions. The following personal decisions may impact an employee's placement opportunities:

Requesting a Lower Graded Assignment – EPP registrants will only be assigned to positions at their current grade unless they specifically request placement at a lower grade (up to 3 grades lower or grade equivalents lower than their present permanent assignment and, for certain veterans, up to 5 grades lower or grade equivalents lower than their present permanent assignment). EPP registrants who request placement in a lower graded position may be eligible for grade retention for up to 2 years followed by provision of indefinite pay retention in accordance with Federal grade and pay retention regulations (see: 5 CFR 536, eligibility will be determined at the time of EPP registration).

EPP registrants who request placement at a lower grade may increase the likelihood of identifying an assignment that matches their personal career interests and/or occupational goals. An employee's willingness to accept a voluntary change to a lower grade must be documented/authorized through the EPP registration process.

Willingness to Accept Assignment Outside the Local Commuting Area:

EPP registrants will only be referred for assignment to positions within their local commuting area unless they specifically request placement in other locations. There will be no mandatory reassignments outside the commuting area. Furthermore, moving expenses may not be authorized when a match results in the voluntary reassignment/placement of an employee outside the commuting area.

**E. Promotion Potential:**

Using noncompetitive procedures (reassignment, change to lower grade), EPP candidates may only be placed into positions with no greater promotion potential than their assignment of record or the potential of a prior, documented, permanent assignment. However, EPP candidates may apply and be considered for vacancies with promotion potential under competitive procedures, i.e., merit promotion and delegated examining.

**IV. EPP Components:**

The employee placement program for employees affected by the implementation of an MEO will be executed during a pre-established period prior to an MEOs stand-up date. This program will consist of four elements – 1) the identification, by IC/OD, of the number of positions that each will allocated for placement of affected employees; 2) an initial matching program through which these employees express preference for positions within an IC/OD and job offers are made to interested employees; 3) a program of directed reassignment for affected employees who have not secured alternative employment at the time of an MEO stand-up; and 4) a formal transition period that will commence upon placement into a position within NIH, through a directed reassignment, outside of the MEO that resulted in the displacement. Each of these elements is described in detail below:

1. Determination of the number of positions to be established by each IC/OD:  
Each IC/OD organization has been assigned an allocation which represents the number of full time permanent positions, or “job opportunities” that it will make available for affected employees, based on 100 positions to be filled. This allocation represents each IC/OD receiving one allocation, in addition to receiving a prorated share based on the remaining FTEs to be filled. The prorated distribution is calculated based on the proportion of the organization’s FTE ceiling in relation to the total NIH FTE ceiling.

This allocation will remain in place until 100 placements have been satisfied, at which time a new allocation will be calculated based on the FTE ceilings for the respective fiscal year. When an IC/OD has met its allocation requirement it is no longer required to participate in the EPP though it would benefit the corporate NIH and the remaining affected employees if the IC/OD offices continued to consider affected employees for additional vacancies.

No additional FTEs will be provided to IC/OD organizations as part of this allocation process.

2. Intra and Inter IC/OD Initial matching of affected employees to positions:  
Intra-IC/OD Placement – Placement in which the employees IC of record can initiate the internal assignment of an employee not placed in the restructured organization to an alternate permanent position.

Inter-IC/OD Placement – Placement in which an IC is able to identify and assign an employee, not placed in the restructured organization or in an alternate permanent position within the employees IC of record, when an employees skills match a workload or functional need.

During a pre-established period of time prior to an MEOs stand-up date, which will vary with each MEO, employees will be provided the opportunity to express an interest in any non-MEO positions established by any of the ICs/OD as part of the EPP for which they qualify. Selecting officials, in turn, may select any of the

employees who have expressed an interest and who possess the qualifications for the positions.

Placement actions will occur in the following sequence:

**OHR provides employee resumes to ICs/OD** – The OHR representative will provide IC/OD organizations with resumes and registration forms of all employees not placed within the MEO. Employee information will be used by the IC/OD organizations to identify and/or develop job opportunities in an effort to match employee qualifications and interests to the needs of the organization and in an effort to accomplish their placement allocations.

**ICs/OD Provide Inventory of Job Opportunities to OHR** – IC/OD organizations, when available, may provide the OHR representative with an inventory of job opportunities and job descriptions. These positions will be distributed to affected employees that meet the qualifications. The inventory will include the name of an IC/OD contact or selecting official; a classified job description or submission of a proposed description with recommended title, series, and grade; special skill requirements; and name and location of the organization.

The employee must indicate a preference for any of the jobs opportunities provided within 5 working days of receipt of the listing, should they wish to do so. The employee should indicate this preference by notifying the designated OHR representative (use of email is the preferred method in the interest of time). The OHR representative will refer employees who meet basic qualification requirements to selecting officials.

**Selecting Officials make employment offers from those indicating a preference for that position** – Selecting officials should notify OHR as quickly as possible should they wish to make a selection from among those affected employees. OHR will make the formal offer to the employees and coordinate actions as necessary. If the selectee declines an offer, and other candidates are referred, then the process of selecting and making job offers may continue. Selecting officials are encouraged to make selections as expeditiously as possible recognizing that directed reassignments will occur as of the stand-up date of the MEO for remaining unplaced affected employees.

**Selectees may accept or decline offers that are made** – The selectee will have three workdays to inform OHR that they either accept or decline an offer. Declination of an offer still allows the employee the opportunity for continued consideration for other offers until the stand-up date of the MEO at which time directed reassignments will be effected.

3. Matching of Affected Employees Through Directed Reassignment:  
Employees who have not received placement into an MEO or other job

opportunity by the established MEO stand-up date will be immediately matched into a position through directed reassignment. To the greatest extent possible the effective date of such actions should occur at the beginning of a pay period. Such an assignment is a management directed action and failure to accept an offered position under this method may subject employees to adverse action up to and including termination.

At the conclusion of this placement process, which will be coincident with the standup date of the MEO, all affected employees will have been placed in full-time permanent positions and consistent with the allocations provided to the ICs/OD.

4. Formal Transition Period:

Employees that are placed outside of the MEO through directed reassignment will receive a formal transition period that will commence upon placement into a permanent position outside of the MEO. In voluntary placement situations the decision to initiate a formal transition period will be discretionary to the leadership of the IC. This formal transition period will provide training and development that is directly related to the position to which assigned.

An assessment of service and training levels required to develop skills necessary for the employees new permanent position will be prepared by the NIH Transition Center and employee. The types of services and training requirements will be detailed in an Individual Transition Plan (ITP), and presented to the supervisor of record for review and approval.

Duration of services during this period will be less than or equal to 12 months. The actual length will also be determined by the assessment and defined in the ITP that is presented to the supervisor of record for review and approval.

V. Credit for Placements

An IC/OD will receive credit against their allocation for voluntary placements of affected employees made during the voluntary placement program and for any placement occurring through directed reassignment.

When an IC/OD has met its allocation requirement it is no longer required to place impacted employees though it would benefit the corporate NIH and the remaining affected employees if the IC/OD offices continued to consider affected employees for additional vacancies.

VI. Transition Services

The NIH Transition Center provides services that are specifically designed to facilitate the reassignment and retraining of employees affected by restructuring

initiatives. The Center's Career Specialists are also available to provide individual and/or group employee and management support, as well as resources and tools.

Services are provided to support the retraining and development of employees permanently assigned to positions outside of the MEO, through the Intra or Inter IC and directed reassignment placement mechanisms that are defined within this guidance.

In addition, all employees impacted by restructuring initiatives are eligible for basic services provided by the NIH Transition Center. Such services include career transition and retirement seminars, resume development, interview preparation, USAJOBS or other identified application mechanisms and individualized appointments with Career Specialists.

Supervisory approval should be obtained for use of official time to participate in NIH Transition Center training initiatives and/or services.

<b>Appendix A</b> <b>NIH</b> <b>Employee Placement Program</b> <b>Operational Summary</b>	
<b>Employee Eligibility</b>	Title 5 and as appropriate other Titles of the U.S. Code, competitive and excepted service, career/career-conditional permanent employee whose position has been identified for elimination or downgrade due to reorganization, restructuring, or outsourcing (OHR notification required).
<b>NIH Director Office of Human Resources</b>	Based on input from management officials, authorizes placement of employees through EPP procedures due to position elimination or downgrade because of loss of a competitive sourcing bid, elimination of positions after reorganization, etc.
<b>Notice to Employee</b>	Employee receives written notice from OHR advising of required placement through EPP procedures. Employee will meet with OHR representative to review qualifications, placement options, and personal decisions regarding voluntary change to lower grade, etc.
<b>Employee Participation</b>	Mandatory. Employees will have the ability to submit preferences for vacant jobs from an inventory of job opportunities and based on selection/offer can accept or reject the offer. Employees who have not received placement into a job opportunity by MEO stand-up will be placed into a job opportunity through a directed reassignment action.
<b>Registration</b>	Employee registers and confers with OHR representative to validate and finalize registration information. Employees will be registered at their current grade within their local commuting area. Employee must provide

	a current resume.
<b>Lower Grade/s</b>	May volunteer for positions up to 3 grades or grade intervals below current grade and, for certain veterans, 5 grades or grade intervals below current grade – retained grade/pay apply (based on eligibility requirements outlined in 5 CFR 536).
<b>Relocation</b>	May volunteer for EPP referral outside current local commuting area – however, selection outside the local commuting area is optional. There will be no mandatory reassignments outside the local commuting area and moving expenses may not be authorized if an employee is offered a job opportunity outside the local commuting area.
<b>Qualification Determinations and Offers of Employment</b>	An OHR representative will make decisions pertaining to qualifications, refer qualified employees to selecting officials, and make offers of employment.
<b>Employee Declination</b>	At the time of MEO stand-up, any employee who declines a directed reassignment action may be subject to termination through adverse action procedures.

**Appendix B**  
**Employee Placement Program,**  
**Registration Form – Page 1 of 2**

1. Name of Employee	
2. Title, Series and Grade	
3. IC / Organization / Study	
4. Duty Location	
5. Date of EPP Registration	
6. Highest Permanent Grade Held	
7. Highest Grade Potential (must be Documented)	
8. Request for assignment to a lower graded position. Up to three grades or grade level equivalent below your current grade. – <b>VOLUNTARY --</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> I request a lower grade level assignment The lowest grade I will accept is: _____ <sup>1</sup> Employee signature and date: _____
9. Request for assignment to a different commuting area. – <b>VOLUNTARY -- Relocation expenses will not be authorized for placements outside of an employee's current local commuting area.</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> I request assignment in the following duty location(s) : _____ _____ Employee signature and date: _____
10. Education/Training Summary a. HS Diploma or GED – <input type="checkbox"/> yes, <input type="checkbox"/> no b. College Credit Hours -- _____ Quarter Hours, _____ Semester Hours c. College Degree -- <input type="checkbox"/> yes – Type: _____ Major: _____, <input type="checkbox"/> no d. Graduate Credit Hours -- _____ Quarter Hours, _____ Semester Hours e. Graduate Degree -- <input type="checkbox"/> yes – Type: _____ Major: _____, <input type="checkbox"/> no f. Other Special Training/Certification: _____ _____ _____	

**Appendix B  
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11. Work Experience and Other Job Related Skills/Training (No need to complete if on resume)

12. Signature of OHR Representative:

Date:

13. Signature of Employee:

Date: