

Article 13: Career Ladder Promotions

Section 1. Career Ladder Promotions

A. The Agency will provide appropriate opportunities for employees to develop and advance in their careers.

B. Employees in career ladder positions will be given adequate opportunity to reach the full potential of their assigned career ladders. Management will provide work assignments, and/or training appropriate for employee development and experience. Conditions prescribed by law and regulation (including 5 CFR § 335.104, eligibility for career ladder promotions) must be satisfied for an employee to be eligible for a career ladder promotion. Upon placing an employee in a career ladder position, the supervisor and employee will discuss the job requirements and expectations for the employee to reach the next higher level. Where there are eligibility concerns, these discussions should include requirements for next career ladder level, potential training, different behavior the supervisor expects from the employee, or taking on a particular project(s). The supervisor will hold these discussions at each level of the employee's progression and at mid and end of year performance reviews within the career ladder.

C. Lack of availability of work at the higher grade level may not prevent a career ladder promotion.

D. The following conditions must be satisfied for an employee to be eligible for a career ladder promotion:

1. The employee's performance demonstrates the ability to perform the duties of the next higher grade level;
2. The employee has completed the minimum waiting period in the lower-graded position (52-week period pursuant to 5 CFR § 300.604); and
3. Pursuant to 5 CFR § 335.104, no employee shall receive a career ladder promotion unless their current rating of record under part 430 of this chapter is "Effective" or higher. In addition, no employee may receive a career ladder promotion who has a rating below "Effective" on a critical element that is also critical to performance at the next higher grade of the career ladder.

E. Supervisors are encouraged to discuss performance concerns as they arise throughout the year that may impact career ladder promotion eligibility. If the supervisor decides not to promote the employee, the supervisor will communicate that decision to the employee in writing no later than the employee's career ladder eligibility date. The supervisor must explain why they determined the employee is not entitled to the promotion and how the employee must improve their performance in order to be granted the career ladder promotion.

F. If the supervisor determines to promote the employee, the supervisor will submit the necessary personnel action early enough to process the promotion within the first pay period of the employee meeting time in grade requirements. Employees eligible for a career ladder promotion who do not receive their career ladder promotion timely are entitled, upon an administrative determination of an authorized official that the delay was unjustified or unwarranted (i.e., the employee otherwise met eligibility requirements of this Article), to retroactive promotion. Such retroactive promotion will be computed back to the first day of the pay period immediately following the employee's eligibility date. Back pay will be computed as in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 5596, beginning on the first day of the pay period immediately following the employee's eligibility date, and interest will end on the day the personnel action is completed.

Section 2. Developmental Details

A. Agency leadership recognizes that details enhancing professional growth and development may be beneficial for employees, especially those employees with full promotion potential up to the GS-12 level. The purpose of Developmental Details is to provide flexible cross training, improved networking and collaboration, skills development, and knowledge-sharing opportunities for employees through temporary assignments while accomplishing Agency work.

B. Definition: A Developmental Detail is a detail that includes a developmental component for permanent employees up to the GS-12 full performance level. They include voluntary opportunities posted on Talent Hub where interested employees can apply for short-term developmental assignments, special projects, or shadowing. Developmental Details may also be arranged outside of talent hub. Skills Marketplace is another way for employees to develop new skillsets.

C. Timing:

1. Developmental Details can be up to 120 days and may be extended.
2. Developmental Details are normally limited to one per employee per year.
3. Specifics regarding the duration, location, and duties may vary depending upon the employee, the project, and Agency needs and resources.
4. Participants must not be on a Performance Improvement Plan to be eligible for a Developmental Detail.

D. Developmental Details support employees in developing skills based on their career development needs and goals. These Developmental Details may promote diversity and inclusion across the Agency and provide knowledge/skills transfer.

E. The Agency will encourage supervisors to support Developmental Details.

F. Employees may explore and discuss possible Developmental Detail opportunities with other employees and supervisors, while maintaining communication with their supervisors and ensuring it does not disrupt their assigned work. Both the home and host offices must approve a Developmental Detail. If a supervisor disapproves a Developmental Detail, the employee may raise this matter to the second level supervisor without fear of retribution. If a grievance is filed regarding the disapproval, having raised the matter to the second level supervisor does not affect the Step 1 grievance official identification.

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